GMA on visit: 'It's $4.6B and counting'

STORY BELOW, COLUMN 1

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2001 ★ 52 PAGES 4 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 347 ₱15

Dong Puno live (again)

STAYIN' ALIVE

WHAT was Ricardo "Dong" Puno Jr. doing with the Macapagal entourage in the United States?

It was *déjà vu* for Malacañang reporters who covered Puno when he was press secretary, spokesperson and staunch defender of

DONG/ A15

Can't stop 'Paskong Pinoy' on INQ7.net

BY CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO
PDI Lifestyle editor

THE SCROOGES and Grinches of the world will not like this bit of news, but all children definitely will: Can't stop Christmas.

In fact, the Christmas season officially started yesterday when INQ7.net introduced Martin

CAN'T/ A15

3-day air strikes kill 113 in Sulu

Military confirming reports Nur may have been wounded

BOMBS are loaded on an OV aircraft to strike at the MNLF faction loyal to Misuari who attacked the 104th Infantry Brigade in Jolo.
VAL HANDUMON

BY PDI MINDANAO BUREAU AND DONA PAZZIBUGAN

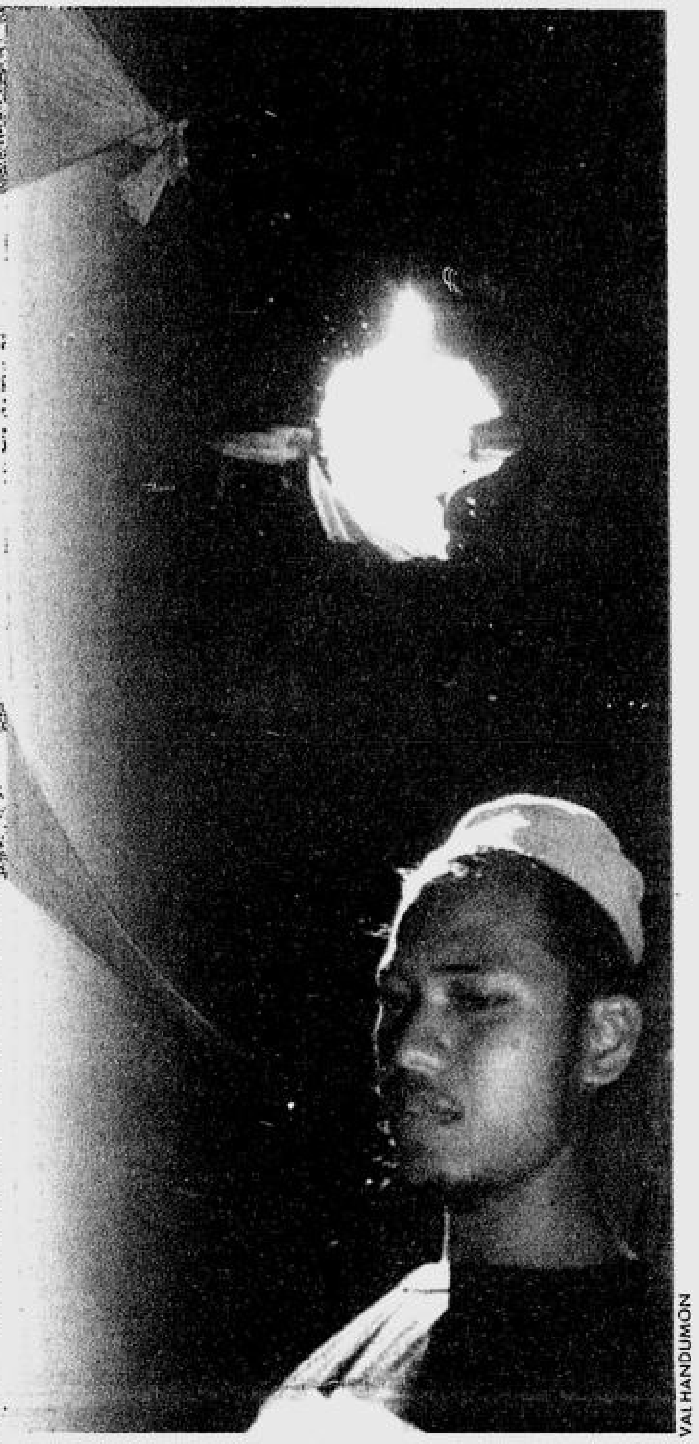
JOLO, Sulu—Military aircraft bombed strongholds of renegade Moro leader Nur Misuari for the third straight day yesterday, as thousands of troops advanced on the ground. The death toll rose to 113, including 100 rebels. Officials said at least 10,000 residents had been displaced by the fighting.

The military's highest ranking commander in Mindanao also said sketchy field reports indicated that Misuari might have been wounded in an air strike on Tuesday, but added that the reports could not immediately be confirmed. In a statement released yesterday, however, Misuari said he did not declare war against the government and that the attackers had acted on their own.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had given Misuari, the outgoing governor of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, only until today to surrender. But instead of proceeding with the preventive suspension issued against Misuari the other day, the President yesterday ordered a rebellion case filed against him and an arrest warrant served.

She will also make an unscheduled visit to Zamboanga City tomorrow immediately upon her return from a nine-day working visit to the United States, to "thank our forces who defended Sulu against the forces of Nur Misuari," Press

3-DAY/ A14



VAL HANDUMON

FROM KABUL to Patikul, air strikes make their impact, this one on the home of Arnold Tauto's family where mortar fire made a hole on the roof in Kasulatan, Patikul, Jolo, Sulu.

GMA on visit: 'It's $4.6B and counting'

RP's all-out support for US-led war pays off

BY JUAN V. SARMIENTO JR.

WASHINGTON (via PLDT)—"It's $4.6 billion and counting," crowed a triumphant President Macapagal-Arroyo at the end of a working visit to the United States that had been undertaken to enlist US military and economic assistance to fight terrorism and poverty at home.

Ms Macapagal's early expression of all-out support for the US-led war on international terrorism—she was the first Asian leader to call Bush after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks—has paid off handsomely.

Before flying off to Mexico City late Tuesday, she announced that she was able to obtain a $2-billion military and economic package from the Bush administration, at least $2 billion in investments from US companies and $261 million in multilateral aid.

After speaking privately with Ms Macapagal at the Oval Office, Bush indicated to reporters that he saw the Philippines as the next terrorism battlefield and vowed to help it defeat Islamic extremists as part of the worldwide fight against terror.

"The front against terror is not just in Afghanistan," he said.

The United States would hunt down terrorists "in Afghanistan or the Philippines or anywhere al-Qaida exists," suggesting that members of al-Qaida, the terrorist network blamed for the Sept. 11 attacks in America, were operating in the Philippines.

Bush promised to boost military and economic aid to the Philippines but appeared to rule out the dispatch of US troops to support a military drive against the Abu Sayyaf group that is holding two US hostages.

Ms Macapagal expressed confidence that the Philippine military was up to the task, but Bush still offered to help "in any way she suggests in getting rid of the Abu Sayyaf."

When asked whether he would send US troops to the Philippines, he said: "That is going to be up to

GMA/ A4

THE BENEFICIARY of many goodies explains the bright and wide smile of President Macapagal during her meeting at the Oval Office of the White House on Tuesday with a grateful US President George W. Bush.
REUTERS

Nur rebellion sets back peace clock in South

BY CYNTHIA BALANA

THREE months after the national government struck a Malaysian-brokered ceasefire with the country's main Moro separatist group, and barely a week after military pursuit operations forced the Abu Sayyaf bandit group to release seven hostages, Nur Misuari has managed to disrupt the Macapagal administration's delicate plans to bring lasting peace to Mindanao.

Julkipli Wadi, professor of Islamic studies at the University of the Philippines, said the revolt would set back efforts to forge peace in the South and have serious political implications.

"Setback is an understatement. I think we are in a critical stage," Wadi said.

Neophyte Sen. Ralph Recto said the situation called for former President Fidel V. Ramos. "I think this is a job for 'El Tabako,'" Recto said, referring to the cigar-chomping career general who brought Misuari to the peace table in 1996.

Since it was Ramos who brought Misuari in from the cold, Recto said, it was only the former President who can "put the genie back into the bottle."

"He can also talk him out of war. The man who made a bureaucrat out of a guerrilla should

NUR/ A14

Strunk cries frame-up; 'suspect' abducted

FOR the first time since he was named mastermind of her murder, Nida Blanca's embattled husband yesterday spoke up and declared innocence of the "horrible crime."

Rod Lauren Strunk issued a statement wherein he denied ever having met or knowing confessed killer Philip Medel Jr. and said he was "shocked by the recent emergence of a character who claims I hired him to kill my wife."

He said the ones behind the "frame-up" had a "hidden agenda"—"to destroy me and use me as their fall guy in order for them to get away with the crime they themselves committed, to muddle my relationship with my stepdaughter, and to divide the family and render us incapable of moving as one toward our quest for truth and justice."

Medel surrendered to police Sunday and said Strunk had contracted him through one Mike Martinez to do a job on a woman who later turned out to be Blanca. He said he stabbed the actress early morning of Nov. 7 on the order of Strunk, who was supposedly present at the killing.

Camp Crame officials yesterday said Martinez was abducted Monday morning by eight persons, including a woman, in Sun Valley Subdivision, Parañaque City.

Martinez's wife Estrelita went to the offices of the National Bureau of Investigation around noon yesterday to seek assistance.

The Philippine National Police's anti-kidnapping task force is now looking into the abduction.

"*Sayang* (What a shame)," Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, spokesperson of the PNP Task Force Marsha, said in a phone interview. "(Martinez) was supposed to corroborate the statement of Medel."

STRUNK/ A14

MIKE MARTINEZ: Missing since Monday.

Ex-soldier bares ₱100,000 contract on Nida's life

BY RYAN D. ROSAURO
PDI Mindanao Bureau

OZAMIZ CITY—An ex-soldier said a contract on Nida Blanca's life was offered to him as early as Aug. 13 or 14, when he was looking for a job.

Speaking in Visayan and occasional Filipino over radio station dxDD, an affiliate of the Catholic Media Network, the man said a woman who introduced herself simply as Lisa offered

EX-SOLDIER/ A14

Poll exec's killing intensifies 'war' inside Comelec

BY ROCKY NAZARENO, BLANCHE S. RIVERA AND PHILIP C. TUBEZA

THE MORNING ambush of Commission on Elections Director Velma Cinco on Tuesday has added murder to the issues dividing the two factions in the country's election body.

Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo said yesterday that Cinco's killing must have been "job related," and said the statements of his archrival, Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco, were proof.

"Even Commissioner Tancangco said yesterday (that) had I not appointed (Cinco) to that position, she would still be alive today," Benipayo told Senate reporters after attending

POLL/ A4

MAY GRAFT NA NAMAN!

Army chief faces graft raps

BY MICHAEL LIM UBAC

THE ARMY commanding general, Lt. Gen. Jaime de los Santos, was yesterday charged with graft at the Ombudsman's office for allegedly benefiting from an allegedly fraudulent contract to repair and purchase spare parts for Army tanks last year.

The contract involves an undertaking for the repair and supply of spares for the Army's Scorpion tanks worth P201.4 million given to UK-based Alvis Vehicles Ltd., represented here by Bairam Enterprises.

Private complainant Joseph Frianeza said De los Santos authorized the award of the contract, which was allegedly overpriced by P95.5 million, to the British firm.

He also accused the Army commanding general of decreasing the number of spares to be purchased by more than half, but without altering the original contract price of P201.4 million.

Frianeza said the allegedly lopsided contract amounted to robbing the national government right "in its own backyard."

He asked Ombudsman Aniano Desierto to investigate and then indict De los Santos to "stop, prevent and correct any abuse or impropriety in the performance of (his) duties."

He also asked that the implementation of the contract be suspended.

Earlier this month, a representative of a rival UK firm asked Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin to annul the contract between the Philippine Army and Bairam Enterprises.

Carlos Ui, the president of Zyrmax Corp., the representative here of the UK-based TFL Group, urged Boncodin to void the contract because of "fraud or mistake."

Zyrmax has submitted a quotation for a portion of the P201.4 million contract.

In a letter to the budget department, De los Santos said there was no basis for accusing the Army of overpricing as there were no other quotations submitted to it.

Overpricing

"On the alleged P95 million overpricing (charge) brought by Zyrmax Corp., this command found itself with no factual basis and official point of comparison for its investigation," De los Santos said in the letter.

In the letter, dated Nov. 5, De los Santos said it had yet to receive an official, signed price quotation offer from Zyrmax.

"Without their quotation letter, this command cannot check on the plausibility and authenticity of its price declaration," he concluded.

De Los Santos also said that the contract had been "perfected" during the Estrada administration, had passed through the proper channels and been "approved by the highest official of the land."

The Army spokesperson, Lt. Col. Jose Mabanta, said that De los Santos' role had been "merely ministerial." The documents were processed before De los Santos assumed the Army command.

Besides De los Santos, Frianeza also indicted Bairam Enterprises representatives Lionel W. Steele, Rosario "Cherry" Ong and Jude Villanea.

He said the four had allegedly conspired to commit the anomalies, "all of whom confederated to profit and defraud, by entering and insisting on a contract grossly disadvantageous to the national government."

The contract was concluded on Nov. 19, 2000 for the maintenance of spares of 17 Scorpion tanks, minor repair of three other units and major repair of 10 more tanks.

Frianeza claimed the contract listed 116 items for spares and repairs, costing P201,440,262.

Maintenance

Of the amount, P121.6 million was reserved for maintenance of spares for 17 units, P10.6 million for minor repair of three units, and P69.1 million for major repair of 10 units.

However, Frianeza said the original 116 items to be supplied and approved "were mysteriously and unilaterally reduced to 61 items, for the same contract price."

He said that when the TFL Group, through its local distributor Zyrmax, discovered the reduction, it took the initiative to offer and submit its own quotation for the same 61 items and quantity to the Army.

"Comparatively, the quotation submitted by the Zyrmax is much lower than the insisted contract price of the Bairam Enterprises," he said.

Frianeza said the quotation amounted to only P105.8 million, against Bairam's P201.4 million. Thus, he said the overprice amounted to P95.5 million.

Frianeza also said it was illegal for De los Santos to have engaged in a negotiated sale in lieu of a public bidding.

He alleged that the Army chief unlawfully secured and profited from the transaction which, he said, was manifestly and grossly disadvantageous to the national government.

He said the respondents were able to draw out 30 percent of the contract price but the items to be supplied remain undelivered. *With a report from Martin P. Marfil*

'Ghost' delivery haunts Chavit

BY MICHAEL LIM UBAC

FORMER Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson has been charged with graft before the Ombudsman's Office in connection with the alleged ghost purchase by the province of a P9.5 million backhoe last year.

A group calling itself the Save Ilocos Sur Alliance (SISA), represented by Nestor Segismundo, David Roca and Arajal Ilustre, filed the graft complaint yesterday.

Also named respondents were provincial officials during Singson's term—Vice Gov. Deogracias Victor Savellano, general services office chief Ernie Mendoza, administrator Ma. Victor Cu, budget officer Erlita Arce and treasurer Antonio Gundran.

The complaint charged Singson and the five officials with violating Republic Act 3019, the Anti-Graft Law, for allegedly giving unwarranted advantage to the supplier of the backhoe.

Records showed a sales invoice was prepared by the supplier, Compressed Air Machineries & Equipment Corp. (Camec), on Feb. 4, 2000.

"However, it was only later on Feb. 7, 2000 that a purchase request and purchase order were prepared by the provincial officials of Ilocos Sur," the complaint said.

"Thereafter, the respondents caused the issuance of a certificate of inspection on Feb. 7, 2000, together with an acceptance of delivery duly signed by the chief of the general services office and respondent Singson," the complaint read.

Last January, the Commission on Audit discovered there "was actually no delivery of the backhoe made," the complaint added.

The COA was told delivery of the backhoe was made, but it was returned because of supposed defects found during inspection.

The backhoe could not be found anywhere, however, "nor is there any evidence that it had been returned to Camec," the complaint said.

For his part, Singson said he welcomed the charges as an opportunity to put to rest the "unfounded allegations of this group which has done nothing but malign me in order to discredit my administration."

In a press statement, he said SISA was "a small group composed of disgruntled personalities who are fabricating issues as they have never gained any solid ground in the political arena."

He said the group chose the name SISA, which is also the acronym of a province-wide Church-based organization, the Simbahan Sangkakarubaan, "to mislead the people of Ilocos Sur into thinking that theirs is the same religious group."

Singson said he has evidence the group is funded by the Partido ng Masang Pilipino, Estrada's political party, as part of an orchestrated campaign to "discredit me as one of the principal witnesses against Estrada."

It was Singson's revelations in October last year about Estrada allegedly receiving illegal gambling payoffs and taking Ilocos Sur tax money that drove his once close friend from the presidency.

General charged with conflict of interest

BY MICHAEL LIM UBAC

OMBUDSMAN Aniano Desierto filed yesterday criminal charges with the Sandiganbayan against Police Chief Supt. Cresencio L. Maralit, national police spokesperson, for conflict of interest.

Desierto charged Maralit with violating Republic Act 6713, the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, and RA 5487, the Private Security Agency Law, for allegedly maintaining an interest in a security agency despite being a Philippine National Police official.

"Maralit was found to have been employed as a manager of Criscar Security and Detective Services Inc., which is a private enterprise regulated and supervised by the PNP," Desierto said.

Maralit was also on the agency's board of directors, according to Desierto.

The complaint, filed on Jan. 16, averred that Criscar was formed on July 7, 2000 with Maralit as one of its incorporators and directors.

The private complainant, Priscilla J. Carlos, said she and the other incorporators left out Maralit's name from the list of directors "but made him a silent member and a manager because of his alleged connections in Camp Crame."

Carlos said she then discovered in November last year that Maralit was also involved or had an interest in another security agency allegedly through his wife, Remedios Junio Maralit, who is a director of Butler Security Agency.

In his defense before Ombudsman investigators, Maralit said there was no truth to Carlos' allegations.

He told the probers he was not connected with the PNP-SOSIA and, therefore, was not tasked with implementing or enforcing RA 5487.

The SOSIA was the Supervisory Office for Security and Investigation Agency, which oversaw private security firms. It has since been replaced by the SAGSD, the Security Agencies and Guards Supervisory Division.

Carlos, however, said Criscar was a combination of Maralit's nickname, Cris, and the first syllable of her family name.

Ombudsman probers were also able to obtain the security agency's logbook, which showed that Maralit had been reporting to the Criscar office, as well as receipts for Criscar office furniture and equipment purchased under Maralit's name.

Contacted by the INQUIRER for his side, Maralit denied owning a security agency.

He had the INQUIRER talked to a woman over the phone he introduced as Priscilla Carlos, the owner of the security firm and complainant.

Carlos told the INQUIRER that she had filed a motion to withdraw the case last week because of "lack of interest."

Carlos was apparently in Maralit's office when the INQUIRER called.

For his part, Maralit said he was not the owner of the firm and that he was merely a security consultant.

He said he was not on the payroll of the firm and that "their differences" had been patched up, without elaborating. *With Martin P. Marfil*

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that a decision in **DARAB Case No. 6658** (Reg. Case No. VI-10-AKL-95) entitled **AURORA VILLALUNA CUEVAS and LINDA VILLALUNA VILLARANTE versus EFITANIA ILI** was promulgated by the DAR Adjudication Board, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City on February 5, 2001.

Counsels and parties to this case particularly **Atty. Rosalinda Tormon** whose last known address was in **Sut Yat Sen Bldg., Mapa St., Iloilo City** are hereby advised to get a copy of the said decision from the DARAB Secretariat, DAR Adjudication Board, Diliman, Quezon City. After the lapse of thirty (30) days from the date of the posting of this notice, without any motion for reconsideration or appeal being filed, an Entry of Judgment shall be made and the decision to this case shall become final and executory.

November 20, 2001. Diliman, Quezon City.

Acting Executive Director
DARAB Secretariat

Inquirer-Nov. 22 & 29, 2001

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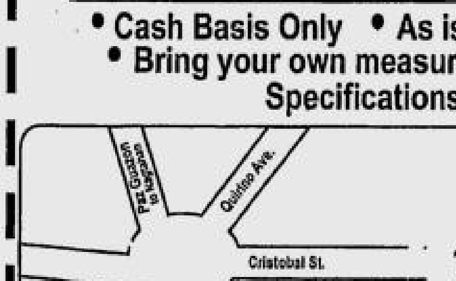

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Senate set to slash budget by ₱30B

By C. Balana

THE SENATE committee on finance will slash by P30 billion the P780-billion budget approved by the House of Representatives for next year.

In announcing the budget cut, Sen. John Osmeña, committee chair, told a press conference that the priority lies in saving government money for next year in the face of a huge budget deficit.

Osmeña noted that the budget approved by the House Tuesday night was "extremely tight."

Of the P780 billion proposal, debt service will need P205 billion, IRA for local government, P134.4 billion, salaries and wages, P264 billion.

This only leaves P180 billion for operating expenses and capital outlay.

Drastic cuts

"We're not approving en toto so we are going to be cutting back. There are going to be deep, very drastic cuts in this budget that we are going to undertake," Osmeña said.

The first agency to experience a cut yesterday was the Commission on Elections in which the committee slashed its budget from P2.5 billion to only P1.3 billion.

Osmeña said the committee cut out of the Comelec budget the P900-million appropriation for the barangay election scheduled in May next year, and the P500 million budget for the modernization and other activities of the poll body.

He said the executive department will have to decide whether or not it was to proceed with the modernization project in view of the admission of the Comelec officials that the modernization may be partial.

"It's going to be a problem because we cannot do a partial modernization," Osmeña said.

He said Congress could pass a supplemental budget if the Comelec finally decides it can proceed with full modernization and the holding of the barangay election.

Large cuts

Also to experience large cuts were departments and government agencies with large increases in their budgets.

These were the Department of National Defense which proposed a P10 million increase in its modernization program, the Philippine National Police, Department of Transportation and Communications, Department of Agrarian Reform, Department of Interior and Local Government's Office of the Secretary, Pasig Rehabilitation, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, National Food Authority, Office of the President, Department of Justice's Office of the Secretary, University of the Philippines, Commission on Appointments and the Presidential Electoral Tribunal of the Supreme Court.

Osmeña said the budget hearings may be conducted at night due to lack of time and that the committee has only one month to complete the process before it is submitted for floor debate.

The Senate hopes to approve the General Appropriations measure before senators adjourn for Christmas on Dec. 21.

However, not all agencies will suffer a cut.

The budget of the Energy Regulatory Commission, for instance, will be increased from P95 million to P135 million.

The ERC, formerly the Energy Regulatory Board, was created to be the watchdog of the newly deregulated and privatized power sector.

In the case of the barangay election, Osmeña said this will have to be the subject of a future decision of Congress.

And when that decision is made, he said, Congress would appropriate the money in a supplemental appropriation.

"The underlying scene of this whole budgetary process is going to be the effort to cut down on the deficit of the government in view of the declining revenues," Osmeña pointed out.

He said the committee was also inclined to defer as much as possible any expense that the government will have for this year in view of the difficulties in foreign borrowings.

"The priority lies in saving money," he stressed.

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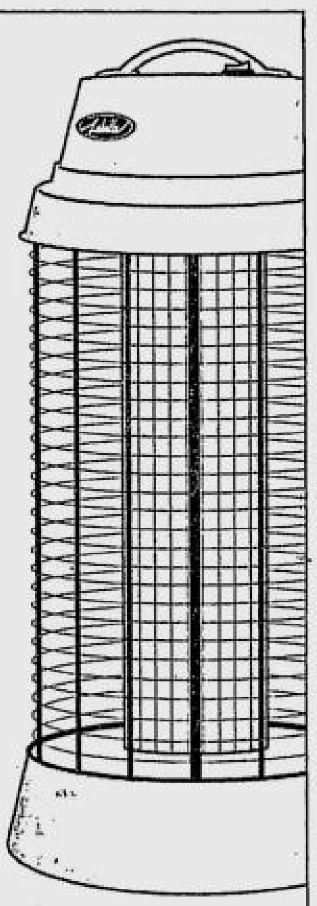

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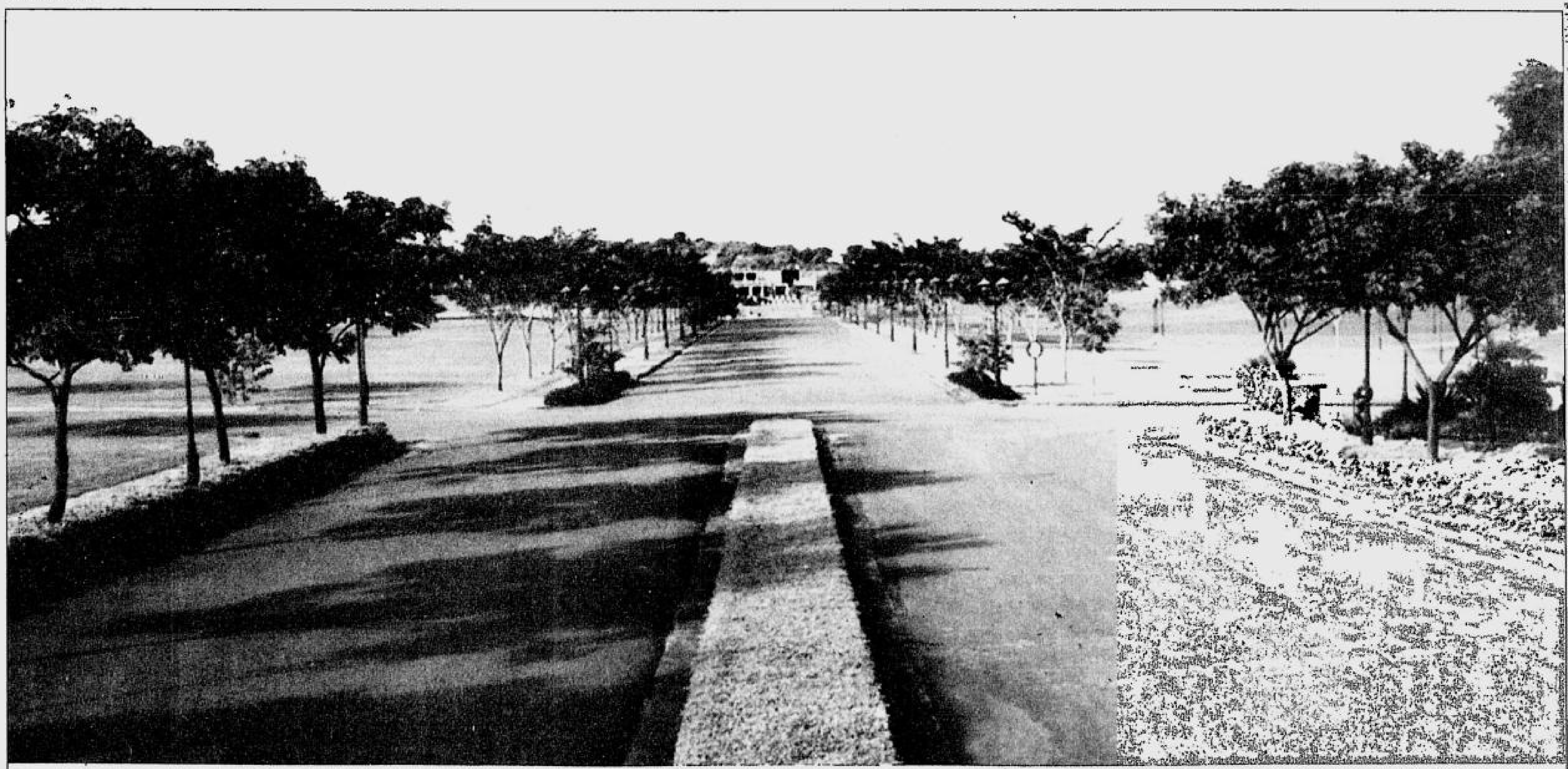

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GMA on visit: 'It's $4.6B and counting'

(From page A1)

the President (Macapagal-Arroyo)."

Type of help

"I have asked her pointblank, what help does she need? She says she's got a great military, a competent military. She's confident that her military can deal with the Abu Sayyaf, and for that I applaud her and wish her all the best, and we want to help her military deal with them," said Bush.

Ms Macapagal said she appreciated Bush's offer to help fight the Abu Sayyaf, regardless of any potential ties to al-Qaida.

"The important thing is we are getting military, economic assistance that will help us," she said.

Top officials who accompanied Ms Macapagal to Washington were equally upbeat about the outcome of the visit.

Speaker Jose de Venecia said it signaled the full restoration of Philippine-US relations that have been strained after the Senate voted in 1991 against extending the stay of US military bases in the country.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said Ms Macapagal's visit had placed the country back on Washington's radar screen.

In a joint statement from the White House, Bush and Ms Macapagal said they agreed that the anti-terror battle "should be fought in parallel with the war against poverty," and Bush agreed to ask Congress for $1 billion in assistance.

They also directed their trade ministers to convene the US-Philippine Trade and Investment Council during the first six months of 2002.

The Bush administration said it would give the Philippines about $100 million to aid in military and security causes for 2001-2002.

About $10 million of that would go to counter-terrorism efforts. Another $20 million would be sent to help modernize the military, the statement said.

The White House said it would provide agricultural exports worth $150 million and food aid of up to $40 million.

THE PRESIDENT and US Secretary of State Colin Powell answer questions from the press after their bilateral meeting at the State Department. AP

Uncompromising

Bush thanked Ms Macapagal "for her uncompromising leadership in the global campaign against terror and expressed deep appreciation for the moral support and assistance her government has provided the US in its time of need."

He expressed appreciation for Ms Macapagal's "efforts to forge a regional Asean approach to combating terror."

Earlier this month, members of the 10-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations adopted a joint stand condemning terrorism and pledging to launch a region-wide assault against it."

Bush also welcomed the passage of a new law against money laundering as a concrete step in the global effort against terrorism, and offered to provide technical assistance to help the Philippines effectively implement the law.

In their joint statement, Bush and Ms Macapagal "affirmed that they would continue to work on a vigorous integrated plan to strengthen the Philippine security forces' capacity to combat terror and to protect Philippine sovereignty."

The plan includes a training package, equipment for increased mobility, maintenance program, law enforcement and counter-terrorism cooperation, and a new bilateral defense consultative mechanism.

More assistance

Ms Macapagal said the Philippines would be getting even more US military assistance next year as a result of the operations plan against terrorism that Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes had presented.

Reyes said the Armed Forces would be getting Cyclone-class patrol boats, 30,000 M16s and 120,000 magazines for M16s.

The defense secretary said the Philippines has already received a C-130 transport plane, a Point class patrol boat and 100 trucks.

Ms Macapagal said Reyes would be seeing the US commander in chief of the Pacific Command (Cincpac) on Wednesday to ask for additional hardware.

The economic package covered in the joint statement includes $1 billion in Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) benefits for the Philippines. This means zero tariff on certain Philippine products entering the US, which is unilaterally granted by Washington.

The package also includes the US Department of Agriculture's guarantee of $150 million for the export of US equipment and crops to the Philippines; $40 million in PL-480 food aid for next year; $29 million for the poverty alleviation program in Mindanao; $200 million in credit to be extended by the Overseas Private Investment Corp. for private sector investment in the country; a debt-for-nature swap for Philippine concessional debts; $38 million in assistance to former Moro rebels; and a grant of $302,500 for a solar-powered irrigation system in Mindanao.

Certainly, the visit indicated that US companies are again taking notice of the Philippines.

MOUs

On Tuesday, Kellog Brown & Root and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority signed here a memorandum of understanding for the establishment of a ship repair facility in Subic. The project is worth $100 million and will generate 4,000 jobs.

Other MOUs signed on Tuesday involved the following:

- Between the Manila International Airport Authority and Futrex Inc. for the construction of a monorail project to connect all passenger terminals in Manila. The joint venture will bring in capital investment of $500 million and provide 1,500 jobs.
- Between Corporate Information Solutions Inc. and Sun Microsystems Inc. The project, worth $3 million, will provide e-service solutions to companies in other countries.
- Between the Department of Trade and Industry and Ford Motor Co. Ford will use its operations in the Philippines as a regional base for the export of up to 65,000 vehicles through 2006.
- Between the National Irrigation Authority and World Water Corp. for a $52-million financing facility for an irrigation project in Southern Mindanao.

Fruitful

Ms Macapagal said her hourlong meeting with Bush was fruitful.

"We think alike," she said.

Bush described Ms Macapagal as a "highly intelligent, dedicated public servant."

She in turn described him as a "warm person."

Both children of former presidents, Bush and Ms Macapagal assumed office on the same date, Jan. 20 this year. This was her first visit to the United States since becoming President.

"The Philippines has been a great ally and friend for a long period of time, and it's in our national interest that we maintain a very close and strong relationship," Bush said before he and Ms Macapagal started their meeting.

"And so I've really been looking forward to this visit," he said.

In an earlier meeting at the Pentagon, Ms Macapagal and Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld used a brief press conference to stress the longtime defense partnership between the two countries.

Ms Macapagal said the Philippines was cooperating with the United States in many ways, sharing intelligence information and providing overflight privileges.

Their discussion of terrorism aside, she said she was in the US to mark the 50th anniversary of the Philippine-US Mutual Defense Treaty.

"This treaty just demonstrates how we've been allies for so long, allies in the Second World War . . . and now allies in the war against terrorism," she said. *With reports from AP and AFP*

Poll exec's killing . . .

(From page A1)

budget hearing. "So what does that mean? It's job related," Benipayo said.

Cinco was appointed by Benipayo in April to head the Comelec's education and information division, replacing Angelina Matibag, an outspoken lawyer identified with Tancangco's camp.

Cinco's son was wounded in the ambush, but her sister, Marian Jayme, escaped unhurt. Jayme later executed a sworn affidavit alleging that Cinco had received threats from Matibag.

"She received several threats and these came from Director Matibag, who is also from the Comelec," Jayme said on the day her sister was killed.

But yesterday, Matibag herself urged investigators to look deeper into the killing. She also fired a broadside at Benipayo, saying the chair was using Cinco's murder to "retaliate" against her for her vehement opposition to his confirmation as Comelec head.

"This is not an ordinary case. There must be a deeper motive behind Cinco's death," Matibag said in a radio interview yesterday. She lambasted Benipayo for linking her to the murder.

Spent bullets

Officials of both the National Bureau of Investigation and the Philippine National Police's Western Police District said they were looking at the internal wrangling as one possible motive.

An NBI source said they would check to see if the bullets used to kill Cinco matched the guns of certain security personnel assigned to the Comelec. The source said the NBI was planning to recall the guns of certain bodyguards assigned to Comelec officials for ballistics tests.

The NBI wants to determine whether the four 9 mm shells that investigators recovered at the crime scene came from these guns, the source added.

Cinco, 62, of 2319 Zamora St., Sta. Ana, Manila, died from four gunshot wounds in the head and the body after she was ambushed at the corner of Eden and Pedro Gil streets in Sta. Ana, Manila on her way to work on Tuesday morning.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said the infighting within the Comelec was still the most probable angle the NBI was pursuing.

"The case is still fresh. We are still checking if Dir. Cinco had other known enemies who might have wanted her killed," Wycoco said.

He said agents under National Capital Region unit head Edmund Arugay were investigating the case.

The WPD is also looking at the Comelec infighting angle, a high-ranking police investigator who requested anonymity said.

But the source said there was as yet no strong evidence showing that Matibag was behind the killing.

"We are not going to let go of this angle. But as of now, there is still no basis to pin down the person, whose name is being spoken about," the investigator said.

WPD investigators went back to the crime scene yesterday and talked to witnesses, he added.

"But they are still gathering information on the gunman. We were not able to talk to the victim's son (Carlo). He was crying when (we) visited him. The bullet was still in his shoulder," the source added.

Feisty lawyer

Matibag said Benipayo had an axe to grind against her.

She cited the legal actions she initiated against Benipayo and some of his allies in the Comelec, including Cinco, which are now pending at the Comelec administrative level and with the Supreme Court.

Matibag said she would cooperate with authorities if compelled to shed light on the case or explain her relationship with Cinco.

For his part, Benipayo urged EID staff who supposedly heard the threats made by Matibag against Cinco to testify against Matibag, who was dismissed from the Comelec last week for refusing to report for work.

He said those who are familiar with the clashes—some of them violent—between Matibag and Cinco should come out in the open and cooperate with investigators.

Benipayo assured the EID staff, who sources say are anxious to speak about previous incidents involving the warring directors, that they would be given protection should they testify.

"It is their responsibility as citizens to tell what they know," Benipayo said in an earlier press briefing. He also appealed to media to submit taped interviews with Matibag or Cinco that could help in the investigation.

New OIC

Comelec Director Mila Desamito, newly appointed officer-in-charge of the EID, echoed Benipayo's call for cooperation.

Desamito, who assumed office yesterday, urged the staff to "bury bad memories and differences, and just go forward" because there was a lot of work to do.

The EID is overseeing the Comelec's information campaign for the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections, as well as the polls in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao next week.

"I am neutral; I just do my job," Desamito said when asked about the raging factionalism in the Comelec.

"I do not owe any individual my loyalty. I work for this institution and the public, and not for the personalities," added the director, who has served at the Comelec for 16 years.

But Desamito, who was previously with the Comelec planning office, said she would relinquish her post if she found herself caught in the crossfire.

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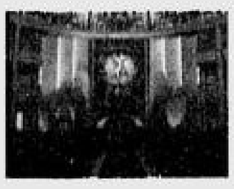

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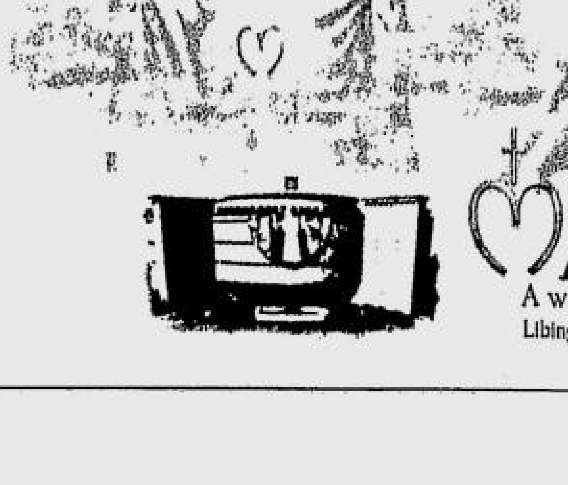

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Civil society, NGOs still have to account for P2.6B

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE SENATE committee on finance yesterday asked non governmental organizations to account for some P2.6 billion in unliquidated cash advances as of Dec. 31, 2000.

Sen. John Osmeña, committee chair, said he was surprised to learn that even civil society and NGOs had accumulated cash advances from different agencies of the government.

The budget of these government agencies in 2002 are now undergoing Senate scrutiny.

"NGOs have been in the forefront of those articulating antigraft goals. This revelation, therefore, is an eye-opener," he said.

Osmeña also vowed to expose the NGOs with unliquidated cash advances.

Yesterday, he named the departments from which there were unliquidated cash advances of NGOs.

They were the Cooperative Development Agency, P688 million; Department of Education, Culture and Sports, P455.8 million; Department of Agriculture, P358 million; Department of Labor, P144 million; Department of Social Welfare and Development, P112 million; Department of Science and Technology, P110 million; Department of Agrarian Reform, P89.5 million; Department of Health, P79.1 million; Department of Trade and Industry, P45 million; National Collegiate Athletic Association, P30 million; and the Department of Interior and Local Government, P22.1 million.

Osmeña said the committee will conduct a separate hearing on this case to find out how these NGOs accumulated such big amount of cash advances from the government.

He said most NGOs have contracts with the government, particularly in the field of research and that they were allowed to make a cash advance.

Foes, allies think Gloria too preoccupied with 2004

By Juliet L. Javellana

THERE is a growing perception, even among the allies of President Macapagal-Arroyo, that she's too preoccupied with consolidating power for her reelection bid in 2004.

This observation was made by Batanes Rep. Florencio "Butch" Abad, president of the Liberal Party, one of the parties comprising the pro-administration People Power Coalition.

But Abad stressed that the LP remains supportive of the President and will stay with the coalition.

"There is a perception which is increasingly being shared not just by the opposition but also by people within the coalition that there is too much preoccupation with consolidating power for 2004," Abad said.

"You know that is necessary but at the same time that should not keep the President from taking even unpopular decisions so we can address not only the economic problems but also political instability generated by what's happening in the South and the peace and order problem," Abad said.

Compromises

Abad said too much preoccupation with 2004 keeps the President from making "bold moves" to solve the economic and peace and order problems and puts her in a situation where she has to make compromises.

Asked if he shared this perception, Abad said: "Well, what I can say is it's a growing perception not only by the opposition which is to be expected but even from the ranks of those who supported the coalition. And perception is reality so if more and more people are beginning to think like that then there must be something to that."

But he added that the LP is not among the President's allies who were reportedly looking for an alternative presidential candidate in 2004.

'There is time'

"I don't think we are in that stage. As it is now, there is time for this government," Abad said.

Abad said one of the indications of the President's preoccupation with consolidating power was her appointment of opposition figures, specifically Rufus Rodriguez as ambassador to Germany.

Rodriguez served as lawyer for Joseph Estrada's Puwersa ng Masa and chief of staff of his wife Sen. Luisa Estrada.

"Sometimes they detract from what ought to be done. It's not bad to consolidate power because that is one of the things she should be doing otherwise she would be a lameduck President," Abad said.

Abad said the President has to put "more emphasis on what needs to be done regardless of whether they are popular or unpopular."

Abad said Ms Macapagal need not kowtow to traditional power brokers because she owed her position to the people.

"She came to power through a non-traditional way. She did not have to compromise with traditional power brokers to be President. In fact she was brought to power by moral rejection of the past administration so she should not be not tied down by compromises and she should be able to effect very bold initiatives to effect necessary changes," he said.

Abad said the President's "behavior during the transition should be consistent with how she got to power."

Abad said nobody can blame the President for wanting to run again in 2004.

"You cannot blame her for that but you can temper that. If you do well in the transition it comes logically that you should stay on for 2004. The emphasis should be doing well now in transition," he said.

Roco confirmed

EDUCATION Secretary Raul Roco was yesterday confirmed by the Commission on Appointments, making him only the fourth member of the Macapagal Cabinet to be confirmed.

Favoring a former colleague, the commission unanimously confirmed Roco, a former congressman and senator.

He joins Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, Public Works and Highways Secretary Simeon Datumanong and Social and Welfare Development Secretary Dinky Soliman in the list of confirmed members of the Macapagal Cabinet.

No stopping ARMM polls

By Rocky Nazareno
and Norman Bordadora

DESPITE the renewed outbreak of violence in Mindanao caused by Nur Misuari and his followers, the elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao would go on as scheduled on Monday.

Commission on Elections chair Alfredo Benipayo said, "It's all systems go" as ``there have been no reports of any trouble in any other areas (in ARMM) except Sulu."

ARMM Governor Misuari had led an attack on a military detachment in Jolo, Sulu, last Monday that resulted in the deaths of scores of his followers and some soldiers.

For his action, the former Moro National Liberation Front leader was suspended as ARMM governor by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Benipayo said he was assured by military officials that "the situation (in ARMM) is normal and (the violence) has subsided."

"Hopefully, everything will be normal by Monday and the elections could be held peacefully," he said.

The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), however, has expressed concern the Nov. 26 elections might be scrapped because of the attack by Misuari.

Yudistranto Sungadi, political attaché of the Indonesian Embassy, said the OIC's committee of eight in Manila would keep its hands off Misuari's "pocket rebellion" in Mindanao but expressed concern over the effects of the violence on the ARMM polls.

"We are concerned about the general situation because we are facing the ARMM elections. We are afraid the people might not be able to exercise their right to vote," Sungadi told reporters at the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Sungadi said the OIC's committee in Manila would meet soon to discuss the implications of the violence in Jolo and Misuari's apparent resolve to prevent the holding of the elections.

The ousted ARMM governor had claimed the elections would violate the 1996 peace agreement between the government and the MNLF.

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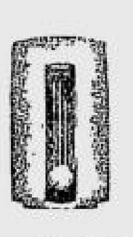

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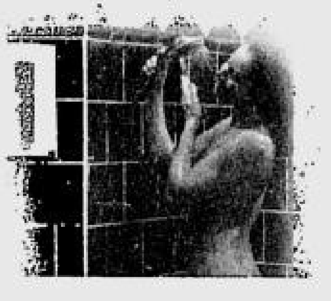

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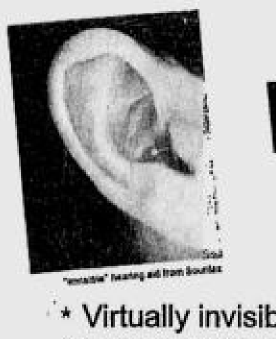

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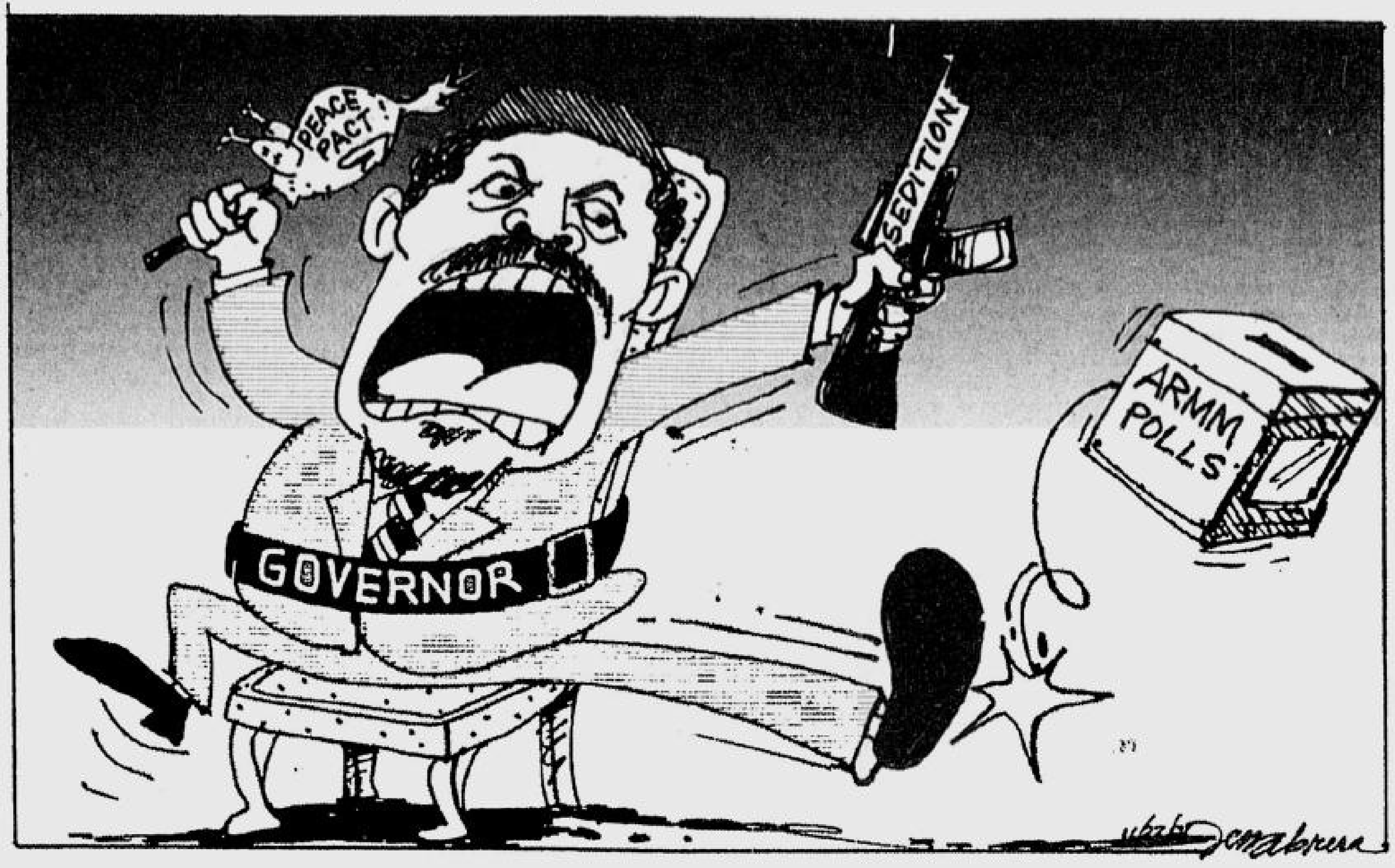


SC holds nation together

EDITORIAL

THE SUPREME Court's 10-4-1 decision, declaring constitutional the plunder law, upset speculations about the outcome of the case. It came as a shock to supporters of deposed President Estrada who were confident that the Court would overturn the law. The fears of certain groups, which spread rumors that millions of pesos were changing hands to influence the decisions of the justices, did not materialize.

All these speculations were fed by unfounded rumors. Among these were that the justices were split 6-6 or 7-7 down the line during their deliberations, and that the Macapagal administration appointed Justice Antonio Carpio because his vote was needed to break the rumored deadlock. It turned out that the vote was more decisive than had been reported, and that Carpio did not have to be a swing vote (in fact, he abstained out of *delicadeza*, saying he was one of those who filed the complaint for plunder against Estrada).

The fact is that the Court has emerged from this case with enhanced credibility despite obvious efforts from various groups that tried to bring pressure on and influence the decision of the justices, one way or the other. The speculations are symptomatic of the breakdown of respect of partisans for public institutions mediating conflicts in our society.

Following the handing down of its decision, the Court has come under another vicious form of attack from the losers, an attack that is not based on strictly legal issues but on suspicion about its motives. For example, one of Estrada's henchmen, in denouncing the decision, said, "How can there be unity... when for the millions of our supporters, the decision is another act of persecution against President Estrada?"

Another Estrada lawyer took some justices to task for being driven by a "crusading zeal." This lawyer questioned the objectivity of the justices, saying they should have focused on legal issues "instead of delving into the personalities involved." But nowhere in the decision was there a reference to personalities.

One would expect lawyers to comment on judicial decisions by focusing on legal issues. But the reactions of Estrada's lawyers have nothing to do with issues, indicating that they may not have a strong case for seeking reconsideration of the decision, which must necessarily be based on legal issues.

Once the Court has handed down its decision, it is fair to criticize it based on issues. The Court, however, cannot defend itself from vicious and irrelevant criticism from losers. These reactions from Estrada's lawyers appear to be addressed to Estrada's supporters to drill into their heads that the Court has not been fair to Estrada, and that it is a party to a conspiracy to rush him to jail. Criticism, for example, saying that the Court has become "politicized" or that the Court had "compromised its independence" tend to undermine confidence in the Court. This criticism is a sweeping allegation, uttered without respect for facts and apparently intended to incite the passions of the mob.

Already, threats have been expressed about another "people power" to protest the decision. Some opposition leaders loyal to Estrada have accused the administration of having exerted pressure on the Court.

In the mediation of conflicts in a democracy, the Court is the final referee. During the past nine months, shaken by constitutional tests affecting the life and death of governments, including that of their legitimacy, the Court has made a series of decisions that have kept this country from being plunged into civil strife. These decisions were argued on the basis of law against the background of volatile political developments that had unsettled Philippine democracy. The Court has been consistent in the thrust of these decisions and in the overwhelming vote that backed them.

It is not an exaggeration to say that if there is an institution that has held the country together during the crises of the past nine months—because of its integrity and the consistency of its philosophy—it is the Supreme Court.

In any litigation, whether or not it involves fundamental issues, there are losers and winners. No one can be higher than the Supreme Court as the arbiter of conflict on constitutional issues. To challenge its decisions with threats of violence and mob rule is to destroy the linchpin of the rule of law in a constitutional democracy.

Completion of C-5 stymied by squatters

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

GOVERNMENT demolition teams tore down last Tuesday about 230 structures along C-5 in Taguig. The squatters put up a fight at first, but when they saw that the demolition team was determined to do its job, they dropped their resistance and some even tore down their own shanties to preserve as much construction materials as possible.

Squatters will always resist eviction even if, deep in their hearts, they know they have no right to the land they're squatting on, no matter what they say in public. *Baka sakali itigil ang* demolition. Or they may be offered money and relocation sites. But when they see that the government is determined, that they are only courting arrest, injury and even death, they give up.

That is why I cannot understand why the Department of Public Works and Highways cannot continue building the C-5 Road in Libis, Quezon City. The construction has been blocked for many years now by half-a-dozen squatter shanties in the middle of the road. From its beginning at the intersection on the South Superhighway, C-5 is an eight-lane highway that winds through Parañaque, Makati, Taguig, Pateros, Mandaluyong and Pasig until it reaches Libis. There, as the road twists to the left and climbs up to connect to Katipunan Avenue, the eight-lane highway suddenly tapers like a funnel into a two-lane, two-way road and traffic is stalled for miles in both directions. The reason: squatter shanties, most of them *sari-sari* stores, are standing right in the middle of the road.

They have been there for years, and the government seems incapable of ejecting them. For those many years, under different administrations, the completion of C-5 has been delayed.

I suppose there is an ejectment case pending in court somewhere and the judge is taking his own sweet time deciding the case, either because of corruption or plain incompetence, coupled with negligence by government prosecutors who could petition for a speedy resolution of the case because it is delaying a government infrastructure project.

There is a wrong belief among many people, surprisingly including DPWH officials, that all ejectment cases should go through the courts, and that all squatters ejected should be given relocation sites and, paradoxically, even paid after profiting from their illegal occupancy for many years of properties that don't belong to them. This is wrong, and this false belief was engendered by that stupid Lina Law which makes squatting a very profitable crime.

In fairness to Lina, however, his pet law has a provision that says squatters in the way of government infrastructure projects can be ejected summarily. In short, those squatters blocking C-5 can be ejected summarily (like those Taguig squatters) without waiting for a lazy and incompetent judge to wake up and render a decision.

Why doesn't the DPWH then use this provision to hasten the completion of its projects? Why doesn't it use the law to complete C-5?

* * *

After Libis, C-5 continues on Katipunan Avenue, to the flyover above Aurora Boulevard, down along the Ateneo and Miriam campuses, and comes to a halt behind the University of the Philippine campus, where the eight-lane highway again tapers into a two-lane road to Tandang Sora.

C-5 is supposed to go through the UP High School campus, along the Balara Filtration Plant and MWSS compounds, across part of the Capitol golf course, turn right toward the clubhouse, then left to Commonwealth Avenue where a flyover will be constructed, and then straight on to Republic Avenue in Bulacan. That portion of C-5 has been awarded in a public bidding many years ago to Benpress, but until now the company shows no signs of any plan to implement its contract with the government.

Benpress claims it cannot start construction because the contract specifies that clearing of the road right of way is the responsibility of the government. And until now, the government shows no sign that it will begin clearing the right of way.

Meanwhile, squatters, land-grabbers, opportunists and syndicate members swarm to the rights of way of government projects, thinking that when the project gets underway, they would be paid and given relocation sites which they can sell.

But again, there is a provision in the Lina Law that after a census of the squatters (which was finished years ago), the new squatters will no longer be entitled to payment of "disturbance fees" and relocation. In other words, squatters whose names do not appear in that census don't have to be paid or relocated. What's more, all of them, old or new, can be ejected without need of a court order, if they are in the way of government projects.

The Lina Law, more than anything else, has worsened the squatting problem because of misconceptions—including by the government's own lawyers—and the lack of political will, not to say squatter-coddling by vote-hungry politicians to enforce the law. The Lina Law has a provision against squatting syndicates, but have you heard of a syndicate member ever being prosecuted and jailed in spite of the fact that each and every squatter colony is controlled by squatting syndicates?

Fast and cheap transportation to and from outlying areas may help solve the squatting problem by giving people quick access to the metropolis where their jobs are and still go back to their homes in the outlying areas where land is still cheap. Completion of C-5, as well as the North Bay Boulevard, the Cavite Coastal Road, and the coastal road to Bataan, plus the upgrading of the Philippine National Railways, extension of the elevated rails and expanded use of water transportation should be able to provide quick and cheap transportation. But the short-sighted squatters themselves are blocking the way to their upliftment.

Still, wrong conception

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I GOT a letter from Raul Concepcion protesting my column on him last week, saying he never quoted from Lee Kuan Yew when he aired his view about what ails the country. I never said he did. What I said exactly was: "Late in life, Raul Concepcion, chair of the Federation of Philippine Industries, has discovered only the apparent wisdom of Lee Kuan Yew." His view about what ails the country is that it is assailed by a freewheeling democracy and a sensationalist press. Lee Kuan Yew's view about what ails this country is that it is assailed by too much democracy and a rambunctious press.

It was the INQUIRER reporter actually who put two and two together, and not unjustifiably so. The conjunction of views may not be total, but it is substantial. And dangerously so.

Well, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry has jumped into the fray and supports Concepcion's analysis. It says as well that what ails the country is a sensationalist media and too much politics. It says the bickering among public officials, elected or otherwise, has created a "politicized atmosphere" in policymaking, leading to the neglect of the needs of the business sector and the poor.

Again, I'll put off the remarks on media—that deserves another column entirely—and just look at the part about too much politics. My answer there is that it depends on what politics you're talking about. There is the politics of principle and there is the politics of personality, there is the politics of the common good and there is the politics of the personal good, there is the politics ideology and there is the politics of greed.

I wouldn't mind seeing a surfeit of the first. Edsa I and Edsa II were politics, too, in case we have forgotten, a campaign that drew in the business community into its bosom. No, more than that, a war that found the business community stalking at the frontlines. Without that kind of politics, Ferdinand Marcos would still be free to haunt this country. Without that kind of politics Joseph Estrada would still be free to taunt this country.

For that matter, what is the PCCI's and Raul Concepcion's Federation of Philippine Industry's position on what ails this country but politics? What is the Economic Summit this coming Monday but politics? Like I said, I wouldn't mind seeing this kind of politics—the same kind of politics shown by other groups from the other end of the political spectrum, like the workers when they press for higher wages and better working conditions. You may or may not agree with what's being demanded, but you are at least clear about what's being demanded, by whom, and who for.

The other kind of politics, true enough, we can do without. I've always said that the problem with our concept of "opposition"—which is what we grandly call the losers in elections who band together in the legislature for common protection or survival—is that it has to do not with opposing iniquity but with opposing iniquity done by people other than themselves. The ease with which Edgardo Angara and company now espy corruption in government would be admirable if they did not have such a hard time seeing it in their time. Elsewhere in the world, the opposition refers to a political group that opposes government policies. Here, the opposition refers to a political group that merely opposes their having been deposed.

I agree that we should oppose that kind of politics with the zeal of missionaries. Though while at this, I don't know why the PCCI and the FPI shouldn't name names. At least civil society has been more honest in that respect, if an officer of the Couples for Christ is to be believed. Many NGOs, which supported Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo during Edsa II, are now apparently withdrawing their backing for her on the ground that she has been spending her waking hours with one thing in mind, which is getting reelected in 2004. Good point. It was Ms Macapagal who proposed to the opposition during her Sona to abandon self-interest for a while and help bring a much-abused nation back on its feet. Yet it is Ms Macapagal who has been resolutely opposing her own proposition all this time.

The PCCI wants to curb "politicking," it should deposit its gripe at the doorstep of Malacañang. The fact that it isn't doing so must make us wonder if it's afraid to antagonize the one person who can make things better for it.

Which brings me finally to an all-important point, which is the businessmen's own culpability in making the country the mess that it is. There is yet one other form of "politicking," which is far more debilitating, or lethal, than the "politicking" the politicians are doing. That is the "politicking" businessmen are doing. The irony in fact is that the business community should complain about politicians relentlessly pursuing their own selfish interests when the whole history of business in this country shows that is exactly what businessmen have done to thrive.

As various social scientists have shown, this country is a "rentier" state or society, one characterized by rich families cornering political power to expand or conserve their economic one. Over the last century, but especially after Independence, the path to business success has been through government patronage. Cronies are not the exception, they are the rule. Marcos did not invent them, though he upped the ante and made cronies a byword in this country's life. They were there before him, they were—and are—there after him. It is through political power that oil companies are able to raise prices with impunity, it is through political power that employers are able to freeze wages with impunity.

The PCCI says too much "politicking" has prevented government from attending to the needs of the business community and the poor. That statement **is** "politicking." I do not know that the poor will agree to the suggestion that their brethren in Ayala Avenue have been as resolutely ignored as they.

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

GMA sells RP to Mexican businessmen

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

MEXICO CITY—As I wrote this column last Tuesday evening (Mexico time, which is 14 hours behind Manila time), the conference of the Christian Democrat International (CDI) was due to open in the following morning at the swanky Camino Real Hotel. The CDI conference has been billed as a very important event since it was drawing the participation of five foreign presidents, in addition to Mexican President Vicente Fox. Security was tight and the hotel was crawling with security people.

The visiting heads of state are Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who ran under the Lakas-NUCD banner, Spanish President Jose Ma. Aznar, Italian President Pierre Ferdinando Cassini, Hungarian President Victor Orban and Colombian President Andres Pastrana. (There were also several vice presidents.) Spain's Aznar is expected to be voted in as the new CDI president in place of the outgoing president, former Belgian Prime Minister Wilhelms Martens. The Mexican president was scheduled to host a big reception for the CDI delegates at the presidential palnce.

* * *

Around 300 delegates were expected at the meeting, many of them serving actively in various governments. Among the more prominent leaders are former President Fidel Ramos, whose party, the Lakas-NUCD-UMDP, is a member of the CDI, and Speaker Jose de Venecia, who has held the post of CDI vice president for Asia for a number of years. In addition to GMA, Ramos and De Venecia, the Philippines sent seven other official delegates, namely, Sen. Loren Legarda, Rep. Constantino Jaraula, Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez, Foreign Undersecretary Lauro Baja, Leyte Gov. Remedios Petilla and former Rep. Gualberto Lumauig. Also attending in a private capacity was businessman Francis Manglapus, whose father, the late Sen. Raul Manglapus, was among the original pillars of the CDI movement in the Philippines.

* * *

In her address Wednesday before the CDI's plenary session, which she was to read in Spanish, GMA was expected to prod the Western countries to push for more serious dialogue between the Christian and the Muslim worlds in order to avert a worsening of the "clash of civilizations." This call is deemed more urgent now that the West can afford to be more magnanimous, following the collapse of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and the fact that Osama bin Laden is on the run. Since the majority of the CDI leaders come from the developed countries of Europe, GMA was likely to echo her address before the United Nations in urging the more affluent countries to heed the plight of the poorer nations, many of which were Muslim.

Ms Macapagal was also scheduled to attend a series of roundtable conferences with a number of big Mexican business groups, principally the Grupo Carso led by its chair, Carlos Slim, to pitch for investments in the Philippines.

* * *

Accompanied by First Gentleman Miguel Arroyo, the President was scheduled to stay only for about 16 hours in the Mexican capital, after which she was to fly back to San Diego, California, where she was to meet with the Filipino community before heading home. The government rented two Lear jets for her party to use within the United States and Mexico to make sure she could keep her tight schedule. From San Diego she was scheduled to take a commercial flight of the Philippine Airlines for the trip home.

The Star's Carmen Pedrosa and I were among the media people invited by the CDI for this conference in Mexico City. The other evening we took the PAL flight to Los Angeles and caught the connecting flight of Mexicana Airlines to Mexico City. The PAL plane was skippered by Capt. Alfredo "Spike" Juliano, who's scheduled to pilot the same plane that GMA will take back to Manila. Our touchdown at the LA airport was very smooth, and as we all filed before the US immigration, I congratulated the captain for our smooth landing.

* * *

Juliano, who was handpicked to fly GMA back to Manila, is a graduate of the Philippine Air Force Flying School, with 31 years of flying experience. He comes from a family of distinguished pilots. His father, the late Alfredo Juliano, distinguished himself as a young lieutenant who fought air combats for the PAF and became one of the "six heroes of the air" during World War II. This group included Captains Jesus Villamor and Cesar Basa, after whom two major Air force bases are named. Spike has another pilot-brother, Capt. Francisco Juliano, who retired from PAL, and two brothers-in-law from the same flying school: retired Generals Panfilo Villaroel, a former Air Transport Office chief, and Telesforo Tayko. A cousin, PAF Brig. Gen. Joey Lalisa, is still in the active service.

* * *

We almost didn't make it to the CDI conference. As our Mexicana plane approached the Mexican capital before 6 a.m., the pilot received word that the airport was closed due to poor visibility. Mexico City's problem with fog owes to the pollution enveloping it and the fact that it is 7,350 feet above sea level (over 2,000 feet higher than Baguio). We had to fly to the alternate airport, Acapulco, 45 minutes away. I got quite excited about landing there, for I had been fascinated by accounts of the Galleon Trade between Acapulco and Manila from the 17th to the 19th centuries. I was hoping we could stay long enough for some sightseeing while waiting for Mexico's airport to open.

* * *

But my first encounter with Acapulco was unpleasant. At the airport where our papers were processed, burly immigration officers wouldn't allow us to enter the country as we had only the courtesy gratis visa issued by Mexican Consul-General Cardiel in Manila. The amiable embassy official said this separate courtesy document would be sufficient for our entry for the conference, but the immigration officers were looking for the stamp on our passport. They even threatened us with deportation, although we pointed out the arrival of our President in Mexico City on Wednesday. They went into several huddles and made phone calls as we stood there with very little sleep and awfully tired after a non-stop flight from Manila. Moreover, like all the travelers, we had undergone some tough processing at the LA airport (people with thick rubber soles were made to remove their shoes, for fear they hid metal plates).

We surmised that the problem was communication: Mexico City was probably advised to accept those gratis visas, while Acapulco's airport was not advised about the special arrangements for the CDI conference and we arrived there by accident. Finally, after nearly an hour, someone rescued us from the bureaucratic mess and we were allowed to step on Mexican soil.

Death comes to the Comelec

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

GIVEN what her co-employees have said of her, and what reporters covering the Commission on Elections have observed, it is indeed difficult to believe that the reason for the killing of Comelec director Velma Cinco was not connected to her work.

Soft-spoken and low-profile, as both Comelec staff and beat reporters describe her, it's clear that outside of her work as chief of the education and information department, Cinco led a quiet and simple existence. It's a cliché, as it's said of most everyone who meets a violent death, but to say that she "had no enemies" who might wish her dead seems especially true of Cinco. No enemies, that is, until she found herself smack in the middle of the raging intramurals in the Comelec when she was appointed head of the EID replacing Angelina Matibag.

Matibag was formerly a ranking associate of Comelec Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco, who leads the "anti-Benipayo" faction among the commissioners. When Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo was appointed to take over from Harriet Demetriou, it was Matibag, as head of the EID, who led the charge against him after he replaced her. A career Comelec official of 33 years, Cinco became an unwilling pawn in the battle royale inside the poll body.

Benipayo read a statement that was astounding in its bitterness and melodrama in the wake of Cinco's fatal ambush. Tancangco was amazingly cavalier in her reaction to the shocking death of a senior official, saying she was "used to being blamed for anything bad that happens" at the Comelec.

Oh, but this is much worse than "bad." This is truly alarming. For if even lowly associates can be targeted for assassination simply for doing their job, then truly lawlessness is upon us, invading even the once-dusty halls of the bureaucracy.

* * *

WHEN I met him some weeks back, at the awards dinner for the First Campus Investigative Journalism Award at the UST, Benipayo revealed his mounting frustration over the situation within the Comelec.

"You know, it should have been a fairly simple matter to manage the affairs of the Comelec," he said. "As Supreme Court administrator, I had responsibility for running the affairs of all the courts in the country. I have faced my share of politicking, intrigue and patronage. It is all a matter of getting everyone behind you to work for the good of the institution. Except for these people (apparently referring to Tancangco and company), the Comelec is united and working efficiently."

Before we parted ways, Benipayo promised to send documents on a controversy that hounded the Comelec even during the terms of his predecessors. This is the billion-peso contract for a computerized voter registration and identification system (VRIS), which after many years of negotiations has now landed the contractor and the Comelec officials in court.

To this day, though, Benipayo has yet to send over the documents. But I happened to meet with the proponents of the project, executives of Photokina, who head a consortium that, they say, was already awarded the VRIS contract before the project got sucked into the political quicksand of the Erap impeachment trial, Edsa Dos and the change in leadership at the Comelec.

* * *

AS they see it, the project has been held hostage to the political wranglings within the poll body. Though too polite to state it in exact words, it's apparent they believe the VRIS contract is being blocked because its most ardent sponsor is Tancangco.

There also had been talk that the real "player" behind the deal was Guia Gomez, the senior dealmaker among the wives of former President Erap. But Jaime and Renato Chua, president and senior vice president, respectively, of Photokina, protest that while they have known Gomez "since way back," she had nothing to do with their bid.

The VRIS project has also drawn international attention, as representations have been made by the US government in behalf of Photokina's partners, Unisys and Polaroid. "We don't know what else they want us to do," say the Chuas. "When they wanted to test the system, we would call in our technicians and experts from abroad just to be open and aboveboard. But we cannot hold on to these people indefinitely."

Normally, outside of the election season, the Comelec is left to go about its business, a sleepy bureaucratic outpost that seems to spring alive only when an election nears. But these days, the Comelec is a hot spot, and the killing of Cinco can only heighten the tension. Will this impasse ever be resolved before yet another poll official is killed?

* * *

THE WORLD of show biz may be all flash and fantasy, but that's no reason to trivialize the lives of people within it.

Another broadsheet, in a story on the vehicular accident involving budding comedian Vandolph, carried this headline: "Vandolph loses girlfriend, arm and leg."

Apparently, the story was based on early but erroneous reports that Vandolph, son of "comedy king" Dolphy and actress Alma Moreno, had to have an arm and leg amputated. But while the early reports said his girlfriend, who is not part of the entertainment industry, was in critical condition, she is still alive. Why then the headline that she was "lost"?

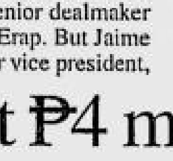
In fact, the latest report is that the 17-year-old Vandolph is out of danger and did not have any limbs amputated. The girl, Desiree Raquiza, is still in the ICU.

What made the headline particularly distasteful was that the story made no mention at all of the fate or condition of the "girlfriend," or why Vandolph had "lost" her. And certainly, even if it were true, the loss of an arm and leg is not a matter to treat in so dismissive a manner.

Coco levy 'ad' cost ₱4 million

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo



LAST Nov. 12, the INQUIRER came out with a 28-page paid "supplement" or "ad" carrying a statement/appeal related to the coco levy issue followed by some 10,000 signatures of coconut farmers.

This was unprecedented. No non-government organization (NGO) or group from civil society has come out with something as costly as this in the print medium. Not even the business sector would spend that much money in one blow to call attention or sell something.

That paid "ad" cost a whopping P4 million. I am told that two other newspapers with much smaller circulation also came out with it. This means that more than P5 million must have been spent for that appeal.

I was shocked, awed, curious, even suspicious. But as far as our advertising department was concerned, that was a blockbuster.

Who was behind the ad? Where did the money come from? How and when were the signatures gathered? I recognized some organizations attached to the signatures but I doubt if they had that much money to spend.

I called people and asked around. I did not get a definitive answer. But by the signatures, one should know, I was told.

This I know: it was an ad agency that came to the INQUIRER to arrange and pay for the printing of that five-paragraph appeal. I didn't push further to know more.

It seemed like a reasonable, uncontroversial appeal to President Macapagal-Arroyo to focus attention on the plight of 3.4 coconut farmers and farmworkers especially at this time when copra prices are very low (P2.50 to P3 per kilo). It also called for the creation of community-based oil mills owned and operated by the farmers themselves, credit windows at the United Coconut Planters Bank, social incentives, implementation of agrarian reform, etc. And lastly, it asked for the resolution of the coconut levy issue so that the funds could be used for the programs mentioned.

Nothing was said about an executive order that would make these all possible, only that the President was their only hope. Nothing about a compromise agreement with Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, the central figure in the Marcos-era collection of the coco levy now believed to be worth P100 billion.

My reading of this is that certain groups in the coconut sector, particularly the farmers, want the President to have a direct hand in the resolution, and soon. But to hasten things, does this mean a compromise deal has to be made?

Oscar Santos of the Peace Foundation, who has been fighting relentlessly for a just resolution, said a compromise deal would mean something like this: You have gotten P100 from me and used it to enrich yourself, and now I am demanding that you give it back. Because you are powerful and I am not, you tell me, "I will give back only P20 or you get nothing."

Rep. Etta Rosales is set to file two bills related to the coconut industry and the retrieval of the coco levy. Former Rep. Wigberto Tañada's more comprehensive bill had a rough sailing in Congress, so Rosales has drafted two separate bills so that each one has a better chance.

House Bill A, the "Coconut Industry Development Act of 2001" hopes to strengthen the Philippine Coconut Authority through the increased participation of small coconut farmers and farmworkers. House Bill B, "Coco levy Funds and Assets are Public Funds Act" declares the coco levy funds and assets as public funds. It also creates the Presidential Coconut Industry Development Council for management purposes.

I hope these two bills will dramatically facilitate the recovery of the coco levy that is in the pockets of a powerful few.

Last Tuesday, a group of farmer leaders from the coconut sector and agrarian reform advocates met for a round-table discussion. The topic was "The Most Sacred Cow, the Danding Cojuangco Estates, the Coco Levy and Other Related Issues." It could have been subtitled: "How do you solve a problem like Danding?"

One of the urgent issues presented was the "militarized" haciendas of Cojuangco who has evaded genuine agrarian reform. One farmer said Cojuangco has become a "role model" for *hacenderos* on how to go around the law.

According to AR Now! (People's Agrarian Reform Network), Cojuangco dictated his own program. He offered his properties for voluntary land transfer (VLT) in 1997 and set a time frame. He did these without the involvement of farmers and the Department of Agrarian Reform, which violates VLT procedures. Workers later started receiving P5,000 every six months. These workers were named as CLOA (certificate of land ownership award) holders. Cojuangco invented a buy-back scheme that would place his land under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). He would then buy back the land from the CLOA holders at P50,000 per hectare. Many of the registered farmworkers were excluded from the list of beneficiaries.

Cojuangco's estate also became a testing ground for the joint-venture agreement, the so-called corporative scheme hailed by his crony, deposed President Joseph Estrada who called Cojuangco "the godfather of agrarian reform." What kind of land reform is that?

Last Sunday, the INQUIRER's Across the Nation page had a long article by Joey R.B. Lozano, titled "Rule of the gun in sugarland." The setting was Don Carlos, Bukidnon where Cojuangco owns 2,697 hectares. The place is now known as "killing fields."

Wrote Lozano: "How the Cojuangco estate had become a vast sugar plantation with only a handful of qualified beneficiaries speaks of another reality: the use of guns and goons for land occupation and subverted land reform program." There were pictures taken of a farmer who was shot and lay dying.

A cruel dictator and a gambling, womanizing, inept president—both bosom friends of Cojuangco's—have both been deposed by people power. But Cojuangco lives on. He has people and power in his hands.

It happened one night

YOUNGBLOOD

V.F.T.

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I'M into a serious relationship with a guy who is six years my junior. Yes, as in, once-in-a-lifetime serious. And yes, as in, not-kosher-in-Filipino-society junior. After all, being 23, I was told, "you'll have to adjust several steps down, because, well, where have you ever heard of a mature Pinoy who is 17?"

He's my second, and I'm his umpteenth. But we're working hard to make our relationship work. We may be young, but we both know that what we have had for the past 11 months is something other people spend all their lives looking for.

We didn't connect with each other the usual way. There were no sparks at first sight, no flowers or flowery talk, no arrows going through two hearts. He was a newcomer to an organization I headed, and the hours we spent on the phone were mostly shop talk. I didn't think we would ever go beyond the hi-hello-goodbye stage.

At that time, I wasn't looking for any serious entanglements, especially after having barely survived the last one. Sticky, draining and sometimes woefully petty, romantic strings have the tendency to choke people to death, and I was resolved not to die under such banal circumstances.

Late-night conversations with him ranged from the serious to the silly, but they were never coy or risque. I had a feeling I was just the right sounding board for all that was happening in his life then. But I didn't mind; listening to people unburden themselves had been a tolerable exercise for me. Besides, I sort of enjoyed my housemates' pseudo-jealousy, even if I honestly didn't go for the boyishly *pilyo* types.

But then that fateful party had to happen. On that one, alcohol-filled night, the feeling of familiarity metamorphosed into something else, and our conversation shifted to decidedly more intimate stuff. As we got drunker and drunker, the chitchat got more desultory, and then it was dispensed with altogether.

One of my housemates insists it was a racy Brownbeat song that did it. I still think it was a combination of youth, alcohol and the general air of licentiousness that pervades every college party. In any event, we became a statistic for that particular shebang, if anybody keeps count. In other words, smashingly drunk, we wildly made out on the darkened lawn, oblivious to the other drunks around us, and ended up having to be told by a scandalized housemate to hightail it back to our apartment if we needed more privacy.

Tactful and sober she wasn't, but apparently she was being kind. Everyone we knew had apparently gotten an eyeful, despite the fearsome number of vodka and tequila we had downed. Had we gone a little bit farther, I wouldn't have known how I would have presided over the next general assembly. As it was, I had to resist the urge to wear a brown paper bag over my head.

Given his track record and my own disastrously short romantic history, I didn't really expect anything significant to come out of our drunken encounter. I have been independent and headstrong for too long, eschewing serious involvement on several occasions in favor of flings that boosted one's hormones from time to time without taking up too much space and energy. This attitude earned me several unflattering monickers from my friends, bitch being the kindest.

But something unprecedented happened that night. Afterwards, feeling rather unsettled, I invited him to spend the rest of the night with me. In my own bed. Unmindful of my roommates who came home hours later, and who were studiedly nonchalant the following morning.

Up to that point in my life, I had never wanted anybody else's skin and odor staying overnight on my precious pillows. I just don't know why that time I wanted to wake up with him still by my side. He stayed. And I found that I didn't mind at all.

Sometimes I catch myself smiling at the thought that we've now been together for more than a few flips of the calendar. Aside from the dubious beginning of our relationship, we've also had to fight, coax, argue, cajole and threaten our way through some major adjustments. My caustic tongue, his excessive paranoia (of other guys). My sieve of a memory, his belligerent manner. My existentialism, his devout Catholicism. My family, his family. My all-out war on the occasional blackhead (his), his merciless cracking of joints (mine).

The outside world hasn't done much to advance our cause. Progressive individuals (meaning my divine housemates) have no problem with our "mismatch," but certain institutional norms have caused more than just eyebrows to be raised. Maybe, we rationalize, it's because of the present state of things around us. A dipping economy, threats of a global war, such things couldn't possibly help make our parents happy about our relationship.

The biggest obstacle we have encountered so far is the one we're facing right now. Having finally gotten my degree (hallelujah), I'm now expected to follow the other members of my family to the United States. Everything is ready—the papers, visa, ticket—but I have yet to show up at the airport. I've abused my papa's patience and used the current national security threat in the United States as an excuse. I've told everyone in the family that as far as I can remember, I've never been in favor of leaving my homeland and putting roots elsewhere, and that it isn't fair to make me do so just because everyone else has done the unnationalistic thing. I've also lined up dozens of interviews with Makati corporations, to lend credence to my claim that with my education, yes, I can carve out a living for myself right here.

Of course, it would help if they knew that a boyfriend they didn't approve of wasn't in the equation. But they know that my sentiments are sincere, and that having a boyfriend hasn't made me any less serious or determined. Like, hello, would I willingly take all the ribbing I've had since my friends have known that I'm with someone again, a younger someone this time, in spite of all the crap about immature men I spat out after my first break-up? Everybody knows, words are among the hardest stuff to swallow.

On the other hand, my boyfriend's parents sleep the sedated sleep of the misled. Once, they seriously threatened to disown their precious son if he did not break up with stone-worshipping, animal-sacrificing, beyond-salvation me. But he assured me it would be their loss, not mine, and I wholeheartedly agreed. But how could I ever get along in the future with in-laws who measure a person by her philosophical beliefs, and with the wrong yardstick, at that?

My boyfriend and I are taking it one day at a time. We know there's a possibility that everything we've worked so hard for just might come crashing down, but we try to minimize the risk by actually doing something about it. We look for ways to earn extra money for contingencies, like maybe an extra plane ticket, or something—just in case. He makes sure his studies are on the right track for a better earning potential in the future. In the event that worse comes to worst, like I am forced at gunpoint to get on a plane to the United States or his parents make good their threat, we have a plan for survival. The basic idea is really very simple: Stay in love with one another.

Love gives your life focus, making you see who and what you really want to be in the future. It makes you work hard for that, ensures that you make each move steadily, taking care to build a life together on a solid foundation. It gives you hope even when the going is rough and uncertain, because you know there's somebody else who wants the same thing and is also working toward that goal.

It also helps, of course, that my boyfriend is not hard to love at all. Despite his age, he has never given me any cause for regret, and the occasional compromise has never been for a better cause. He understands that young as we are, we already have to prove to many people that what we have is not just a temporary surge of hormones but something we'll have for the rest of our lives. Let them snicker and predict doom, he says. We're young, we're in love, and anybody waiting for the bottom to fall out better not hold his breath.

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A double standard of justice

LETTERS

MY old mother and my sickly, limping younger brother were mercilessly stabbed to death in our house in the province four years ago in the wee hours of the morning. Both the Philippine National Police and the National Bureau of Investigation investigated their deaths (better yet, went through the motions of investigating them), but to this day, the murders remain unsolved. Our bereaved family may have to wait till kingdom come before justice is meted out to the killers.

There are countless other cases like ours. As a former vice president asked "What's happening to our country?"

My mom and my brother were, of course, ordinary people, and this is most probably why I should not expect the NBI or the PNP to solve their murders in the next 1,000 years.

In contrast, the murder of a popular movie actress just a fortnight ago has almost been solved.

I do sympathize with the actress' relatives, friends and legions of fans. I underwent their trauma and pain—much more so, I think. But they're fortunate that because of her popularity, all the top dogs of our government, who normally quarrel with one another, were one in barking orders for the immediate solution of the murder.

My family and I are not that fortunate. So are a million and one others in this country.

There's always a double standard of justice in our midst, especially in its dispensation. For instance, this kleptocrat of a *diktadora* will never enter a jail even if she is convicted of heinous crimes a hundred times.

Correctly, a late law dean said that nothing rankles in the breast of an ordinary man more than being a victim of injustice. Little wonder, it's the common *tao* who goes up to the mountains, knowing he can't expect justice under our judicial system.

I happen to be a lawyer, and I should know.—**MAXIMINO NOBLE III, Noble Law Office, Fourth Floor, Prudential Bank Bldg., 2182 Chino Roces St., Makati City**

False claims about coco levy pact

THERE was recently a mutual agreement signed between the coconut farmers, led by Efren Villaseñor, and the Philippine Coconut Producers Federation Inc. (Cocofed), led by Ma. Clara Lobregat. This agreement, both said, was historic and nothing short of miraculous, since it would put an end to years of disagreement and mudslinging between Cocofed and the small coconut farmers' organizations.

There is nothing miraculous or historic about the compromise agreement entered into by these two leaders (with Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco acting as witness). For one, the idea of having this kind of arrangement is not new. What the two parties succeeded in doing is nothing more than to resurrect Executive Order 313, which President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has already revoked.

About the only thing close to being extraordinary in this whole deal is that Cocofed was finally able to make Villaseñor budge from his old position of not consenting to any compromise deal with people whom he used to blame for the plunder of the coco levy funds.

Villaseñor and Lobregat claim that the document they signed, titled "Salient Points of the Mutual Agreement of the Coconut Farmers Organizations," is the tool for unification of all sectors and stakeholders in the coconut industry. They say the historic signing of this document will lead to the resolution of the coco levy issue and the upliftment of the industry.

However, we must point out that there are several things wrong with that claim. One is that this agreement fails to answer the fundamental question of whether the coconut levy funds are private or public funds. Let us not forget that this question is technically the root of all discord between Cocofed and the opposing small coconut farmers' groups (which Villaseñor used to be an active part of). Unless that question is answered, then the agreement forged between those two groups is specious and will not lead to the resolution of the coconut levy issue.

As for their claim of unity, we wonder how many of the country's millions of small coconut farmers does Villaseñor speak for. What about those who have disengaged from his leadership? He should first count how many followers he still has left before coming out and claiming that he has the right to represent the small coconut farmers in anything, especially in something as shady as a compromise deal with Cocofed. What about the majority of small coconut farmers' organizations which still believe that Cocofed and Cojuangco cheated them out of the coco levy funds? More importantly, what about the government's very public and resolute "no compromise" stand as far as the coco levy is concerned? Is Villaseñor, who is a member of the PCA governing board, aware that what he is doing directly undermines the government's position?

The idea that this agreement will lead to the upliftment of the industry is preposterous. The coconut industry is falling apart and millions of its dependents are living below the poverty line not because of conflicts among its sectors, but because only a handful of influential landlords and industry players control the majority of the industry's resources, and they have little regard for the plight of the small coconut farmers and farmworkers.

It is hard to believe that Lobregat and Cojuangco would relinquish their hold over the industry's resources in the name of social equity and unity. It is very unlikely that Cocofed entered into that agreement for the sake of improving the lives of the small coconut farmers.

At this point, we hope that the President will not give her blessings to this "agreement" by recognizing it or by stopping the government's efforts at prosecuting those who are part of this compromise agreement.

We also hope that the Presidential Commission on Good Government and the Office of the Solicitor General will not take Villaseñor's position as the stand of the majority of small coconut farmers. It is not beyond some people to make false claims to justify their unsavory acts.—**OMI C. ROYANDOYAN, executive director, Philippine Peasant Institute, Rm. 319, PSSC Bldg., Commonwealth Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City**

Intensity and magnitude of earthquakes

THE ARTICLE "Quake sends Baguio folk into streets" by Gobleth Moulic last Nov. 20 shows once again the confusion over the word "intensity" that keeps coming up in newspaper reports about earthquakes. To stress my point, let me first cite how this report used the word:

(1) "…an Intensity 2.6 earthquake jolted this mountain resort city at 3:32 p.m." Then: "Earlier, an Intensity 3.9 quake shook Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur at 7:49 a.m."

(2) "It was felt at Intensity 4 in Laoag City and Pasuquin town, both in Ilocos Norte, and at Intensity 3 in Vigan City and the towns of Bantay, Sta. Maria and Narvacan, all in Ilocos Sur."

(3) "Baguio was shaken by an Intensity 7.7 earthquake in July 1990."

The correspondent got it right in example No. 2 but in Nos. 1 and 3, the correct term is "magnitude" instead of "intensity."

Magnitude is the measure of the energy released by a quake, whereas intensity is the measure of how an earthquake is "felt" in a certain locality. Magnitude, which is measured using the Richter scale, is a constant. Intensity, measured using the Rossi-Forel Scale, varies from place to place.

Thus, the Luzon earthquake of July 16, 1990 was measured at Magnitude 7.7 but it was "felt" at different "intensities" in various areas. It may have been felt in Nueva Ecija at Intensity 7.7, in Baguio at Intensity 7, in Laoag at Intensity 5, and in Manila at Intensity 6. It could have been felt in Cebu at Intensity 3. This variation happens because some are near and some are far from the epicenter of the quake.—**GARY SILVERIO, National Institute of Geological Sciences, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City**

National Power Corporation
INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID
AD NO. PD-2001-061

One (1) Year Term Contract for Preparation, Notarization and Documentation of Import Entry Declaration (IED) from January 01, 2002 to December 31, 2002 with the following schedules.

Pre-Bid/Time: November 28, 2001
Bid Opening/Time: December 12, 2001

Interested parties are invited to prequalify and to submit sealed bids on the above to be opened publicly at the Sampaguita Room, Ground Floor, Building 2, NPC-OBC, Quezon Avenue corner Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City for the following requirement:

Bidding documents available on **November 20, 2001** upon payment of P100.00 which is non-refundable, presentation of valid Certificate of Accreditation and supplier's number (DCE).

Issuance of accreditation forms and bidding documents - (morning's only, 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.). For inquiries please call Tel. No. 921-2574.

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

Materials Management Department
NPC-OBC (Head Office)
Diliman, Quezon City

(PDI - Nov. 21 & 22, 2001)

Interactive curriculum reinforces values

THIS refers to the letter to the editor published in the INQUIRER last Nov. 2.

The new interactive curriculum being worked on by the Department of Education, Culture and Sports strengthens values education because its teaching will be integrated across the curriculum. This means that the reinforcement of good values will be taken up in all subjects instead of being relegated to only one. We believe that all teachers must be able to impart the teaching of values.

The focus on five basic learning areas seeks to improve the quality of education by increasing the contact time between teachers and students. The fifth, which may be called Makabayan, seeks to inculcate patriotism and good citizenship as a broad goal.

The Biology textbook of the Diwa Learning Systems is not among the approved textbooks for procurement and distribution to the public schools. The errors contained in it must be corrected by the publishers. The private schools using the textbooks must be aware of these errors and act on it.

Education Secretary Raul S. Roco earlier ordered the review of textbooks used in public schools so that errors are spotted and corrected before further orders are made. Transparency in bidding procedures has brought down the cost of textbooks from a high of P80 per textbook to a low of P25. Reforms in distribution are also underway.—**HILDA C. VILLADOLID, director III and chief of staff, Department of Education, Culture and Sports, DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City**

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Muslims against Muslims

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THE FRONT PAGE of last Tuesday's INQUIRER featured the armed attack in Jolo, allegedly instigated by Nur Misuari and his Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) soldiers. More than 50 people were reported to have been killed, mostly MNLF troops and civilians. The clash occurred on the third day of the Muslim month of Ramadan, considered their holiest month and used for fasting and reflection.

Ironically, that same day's INQUIRER featured a letter from Saleh Moh'd Alghamdi, Saudi Arabia's ambassador, stating his country's stand against terrorism but sharing a "general sentiment in the Muslim world that the bombing against Afghanistan should be stopped for the month of Ramadan."

Weeks before Ramadan began, there were already calls from people of different faiths to stop the bombing at least during this month. The American defense secretary responded by saying that in past history, Muslims have waged war even during Ramadan so it didn't make sense to stop the bombing. His remarks drew criticism from many different groups as unjustified, but now, with Misuari's Ramadan offensive, people will be able to use another example to say, "See? The Muslims want war, fighting even during their holy month."

One could argue that we still don't have proof that Misuari was behind the attack, but his aide Abdurahman Jamasali has admitted to media people that they had launched the attack to prevent the holding of elections for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) set for Nov. 26. Misuari himself has appeared on television several times during the past few weeks, furiously attacking the government and threatening to go to war.

Readers who have followed my column know I have always been outspoken in defense of Islam and Muslims, and I will continue to do so. But there are times when I do despair as well, such as when the likes of Misuari put personal interests ahead of the ummah, the Islamic community.

As ARMM governor, Misuari squandered a historical opportunity to bring change to Muslim Mindanao, his arrogance and corruption growing through the years even as the ARMM disintegrated. Dissatisfaction with Misuari reached such a high point that last April, 15 of Misuari's own senior MNLF leaders berated him for wasting the ARMM's development funds, and ousted him from his post as MNLF chair.

Misuari's new war should make us all more critical of the now popular "clash of civilizations" thesis, first advanced by American political scientist Samuel Huntington. Several years ago Huntington said that we were headed for a global clash of two civilizations—Christian and Islamic. The Sept. 11 terrorist attacks seemed to confirm this thesis.

But there are many scholars and analysts who disagree with Huntington. The main critique raised against his thesis is that there is, in fact, no such thing as a monolithic "Christian" civilization or "Islamic" civilization. We only need to look at Muslims in the Philippines as an example. In Marawi City, you find women covered from head to toe almost like Afghan women under the Taliban. But walking side by side with such women are other Muslims who only use the *hijab*, a veil covering the head and neck. There are differences with the men as well: some use the *shalwal kamiz* (loose fitting pants and a long chemise-like shirt) and their beards grown long again like the Taliban fundamentalists but again they walk the streets side by side with Muslim men without beards, and wearing denims.

The clothes reflect varied interpretations of Islam. Just as with Christians, there are conservative and liberal Muslims, and even those two terms that I'm using are quite general: there will be variations as well of "conservatives" and "liberals."

We know, too, that the "Moro" movement in Mindanao has gone through many splits, mainly along ethnic lines. Misuari and his MNLF are mainly Tausug, and so their strongholds have been mainly Tausug provinces such as Sulu and Tawi-Tawi. It is not surprising that Misuari has been talking with the Abu Sayyaf bandits, who are also mainly Tausug. In contrast, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is mainly Maguindanao.

Muslims must look too at how their own internal conflicts are destroying their communities. In Afghanistan, there are fears of a new full-blown civil war as the Northern Alliance, backed by the United States, tries to take over the country. The Taliban's members are mainly Pashtuns, forming the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan while the Northern Alliance's warlords come from minority groups such as the Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara. These groups, all Muslim, are temporarily united against the Taliban but are also fiercely spiteful of each other.

On the surface, the conflict in Mindanao seems to have been an early example of Huntington's clash of civilizations. But from the very beginning, it was clear that "Christian" and "Muslim" were labels used by the Philippine government and by Muslim politicians to obscure the conflicts over the control of land and resources. In recent years, the labels have become even more meaningless, with many of the clashes involving Muslims themselves, between ethnic groups, warlords, even clans.

No doubt, the Philippine government—past and present administrations—have capitalized on these internal conflicts, pitting more Muslims against Muslims. Meanwhile, the warlords try to project an illusion of Muslim unity, invoking Islam and jihad to legitimize their own selfish interests. We need to hear more Muslims, especially the younger ones and the women, to speak out and say, enough with war, enough with the blasphemous distortion of Islam.

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net

Terrorist groups giving RP a black eye

I AM an American who first came to the Philippines in 1981 and, since then, I have visited numerous times. I have lived in the Philippines for the past five years. During these years, I have observed some very positive things about the Philippines as well as some very negative things.

First of all, I would like to mention the positive things. The Philippines is a very beautiful country with very beautiful people, most of whom are very friendly to foreigners. It is probably the very best place in the world for a foreigner to find a wife.

Although the Philippines is a poor country economically, this is an advantage to a foreigner as his currency is normally much stronger. If the Bureau of Immigration does not scare him away with its increasing rates and ever changing policies, then the Philippines will be an ideal place for him to visit and perhaps even live in.

But that is if he does not run into some abnormal Islamic terrorist group. These abnormal groups are not only hurting the Philippines, but they are like a cancer in the world which needs to be cut out and removed. I will liken these groups to a mentally deficient, belligerent rat that has bitten a tiger (the United States), and because of its mental deficiency, it can't seem to understand why the tiger is very angry and wants to retaliate against the rat and its supporters.

In the Philippines, this mental deficiency is manifested in an unrealistic and even childish hope of acquiring Mindanao, no doubt inspired further by the Philippine military's incompetence and the government's pacification policy which ultimately led to the Philippines shooting itself in the foot economically by closing the US bases.

However, I believe that a country's military is a product and reflection of the characteristics of that country. In other words, the military here seems to reflect the ability and will, or lack of these, of the Filipino people.

For the Philippines to improve militarily, economically, and in every other way, the Filipino people need to stop blaming their problems on government corruption and discard their "laid back," "Filipino time" complacency. For a start, the Philippines should stop being the laughing stock of the more advanced countries by allowing these abnormal groups to set up military camps on Philippine territory.—**GEORGE STEWART, 809 Aster St., Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA**

The WORLD
LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

US sees speedy surrender of Kunduz

TALOQAN, Afghanistan—The commander of the US war effort in Afghanistan pledged Wednesday that "we will prevail" in clearing the Taliban out of their last northern stronghold. A Northern Alliance commander predicted a speedy surrender agreement for besieged Kunduz.

Having clinched control of three-quarters of the country, anti-Taliban forces were preparing to talk about how to govern Afghanistan. The Northern Alliance, which controls the capital and the largest share of territory, has agreed to attend power-sharing talks in Germany next week.

New bombardment was reported as Gen. Tommy Franks, the American commander, told reporters at a US base in Uzbekistan that the siege of Kunduz would end in defeat for Taliban forces and fighters for Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorist network.

"I don't know how long that battle will continue but at the end of the day we will prevail in the city of Kunduz," said Franks, who met with anti-Taliban leaders in northern Afghanistan on Tuesday night.

He also spoke of the tightening noose around the Taliban's home base of Kandahar, in the south of Afghanistan.

"We need to complete the work in Kandahar . . . and most importantly we need to complete the destruction of the al-Qaida terrorist network," Franks added.

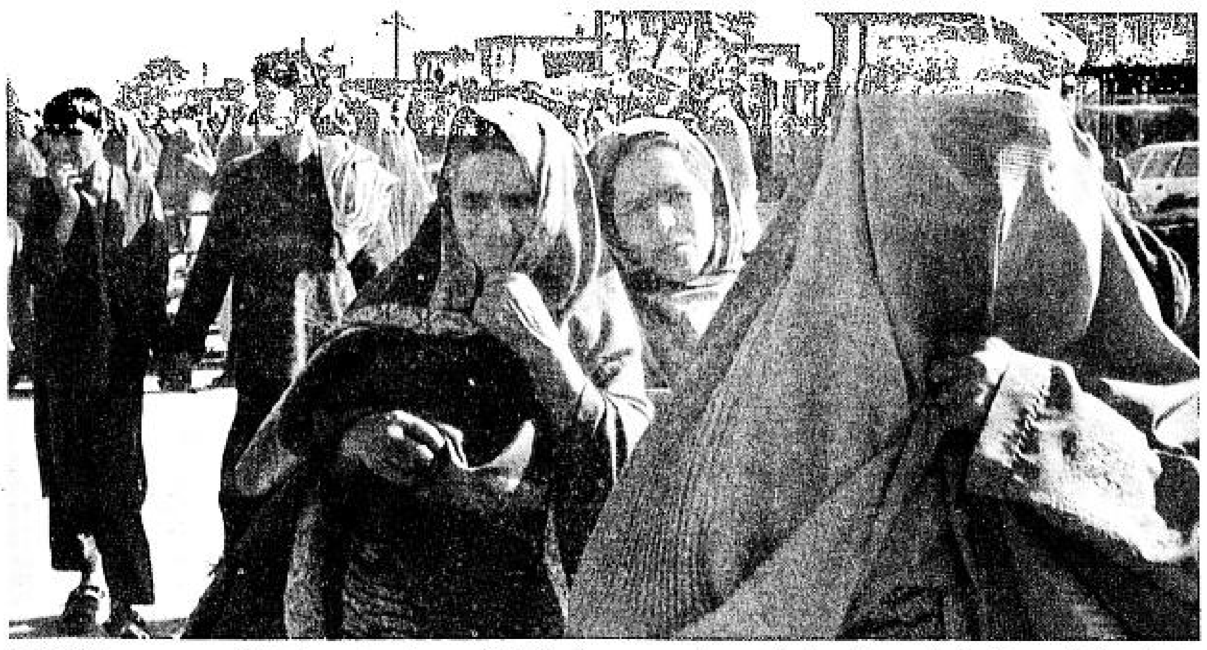
Franks, the commander of the US Central Command, said he was confident a $25-million for the capture of Osama bin Laden would help locate the suspected terrorist.

"I believe the incentives that have been placed on the table will in fact lead to information that will assist us in this effort," he said.

In northern Afghanistan, the opposition's Gen. Mohammed Daoud said late Tuesday he was optimistic that he could finish brokering surrender of Afghan Taliban at Kunduz, perhaps within a day.

"We are hopeful that (Wednesday) will be the conclusion of talks," he said in the northern city of Taloqan.

Talks have been carried out in the no man's land between Taliban and Northern Alliance frontlines east of Kunduz, and were resuming Wednesday. Daoud has been negotiating with the Taliban commander of Kunduz, Dadullah, and former Deputy Defense Minister Mullah Fazil Muslimyar.



TWO Afghan women, their faces showing, walk behind a woman dressed in the all-enveloping Burqa in the streets of Kabul on Wednesday. Under Taliban's strict interpretation of Islam, women were not allowed to walk the streets with faces uncovered and without a male family member accompanying them. AP

Daoud said the talks were being carried out independently of the foreign fighters holed up at Kunduz—mostly Arabs, Chechens and Pakistanis loyal to Bin Laden—and that there have been no negotiations with them.

The alliance's main commander in the north said the Taliban were being increasingly squeezed. But Atta Mohammed, speaking by phone from the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif, suggested there would be little mercy for those fighters loyal to Bin Laden.

"We can't guarantee the safety of the foreign fighters because they have created a humanitarian calamity in Afghanistan," he said.

Early Wednesday, American warplanes reportedly targeted Kandahar, the Taliban spiritual center. The Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press said there were at least two deaths, but that could not be independently confirmed.

Also Wednesday, the bodies of four journalists dragged from their cars and killed by gunmen in eastern Afghanistan on Monday were returned to Pakistan in a Red Cross convoy. Two were from the Reuters news agency, one from the Italian daily Corriere della Sera and one from the Spanish newspaper El Mundo.

Adding a new element to forces in the Afghanistan theater of operations, a senior US official said as many as 1,500 Marines were waiting on ships in the Arabian Sea could be sent to Afghanistan this week to join Army special operations troops.

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that no final decision has been made and that it was uncertain what missions they would perform.

In the capital, Kabul, the northern alliance's foreign minister, Abdullah, on Tuesday announced acceptance of a UN invitation to talks on setting up a broad-based government to replace the Taliban.

The top UN envoy to Afghanistan, Lakhdar Brahimi, said talks would hopefully begin Monday in or near Berlin, with fewer than 30 participants from four different Afghan groupings. *AP*

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Commander says US unlikely to have combat role in Asia

KUALA LUMPUR—US military forces were unlikely to have a combat role in fighting terrorist groups in Southeast Asia, but would offer logistical and other support to regional governments that asked for it, the US Pacific commander said Wednesday.

Speaking at the end of a tour of several Southeast Asian countries, Adm. Dennis Blair, the chief of the US Pacific Command, said US military involvement in Southeast Asia would not resemble its role in Afghanistan, where a US-led bombing campaign has helped force that country's Taliban regime from power.

Afghanistan was "the single country in the world that has been providing a sanctuary for international terrorists . . . and receiving assistance from them," Blair told reporters.

"I certainly do not see other Afghans in this part of the world. All the countries in this part of the world condemn terrorists and their actions against terrorists are very much cooperative actions," he said.

The United States was providing equipment, intelligence and military advisers to the Philippine government to help it deal with the "military problem" of the Abu Sayyaf bandit group, and stood ready to assist other Southeast Asian countries in fighting terrorism locally.

"The United States will cooperate with those countries that are both willing and able to eliminate the terrorist infrastructure," Blair said. "In those countries which are willing but would like to be more able to conduct those campaigns . . . the United States would provide that assistance."

Muslim extremists also operate in other parts of Southeast Asia, including Indonesia and Malaysia.

The two predominantly Muslim countries have condemned the Sept. 11 attacks, but have called for an end to the military campaign in Afghanistan. Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said last week that the international fight against terrorism looked increasingly like a war against Islam.

Blair said that rather than combat, the fight against terror in Southeast Asia would involve identifying and nabbing terrorists, denying them funds and sanctuaries and preventing them from traveling between countries.

He said the United States hoped to expand its annual bilateral military exercises with Malaysia to include more countries to help check transborder movement of terrorists.

Blair, who was in the Philippines last week, said Manila had made it clear that it does not "require or want" US combat troops to join the hunt for the Abu Sayyaf.

After a meeting in Washington on Tuesday, US President George Bush said the United States was prepared to help Philippine President Macapagal-Arroyo fight the Abu Sayyaf "in any way she suggests." *AP*

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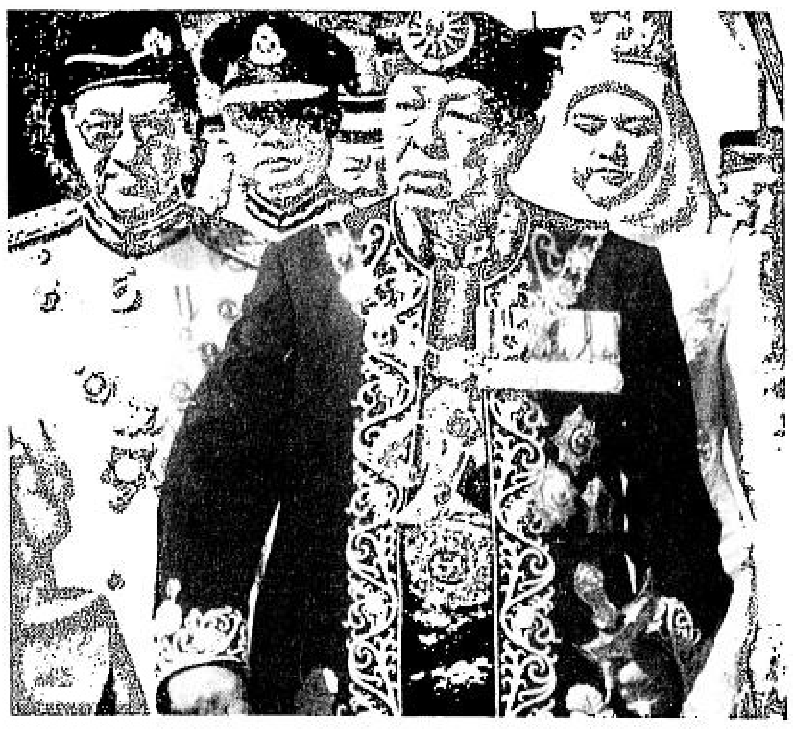


MALAYSIA'S King Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah (center), followed by Queen Tuanku Siti Aishan (right), and Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad (left) during the opening of parliament meeting in Kuala Lumpur, in this March photo. AP

Malaysian king dies after heart surgery

KUALA LUMPUR—King Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah, who was elected by sultans under Malaysia's unusual royal rotation system, died Wednesday after weeks of complications following heart surgery, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad announced. He was 75.

Salahuddin, who also was the sultan of Malaysia's Selangor state, died in Kuala Lumpur's Gleneagles private hospital at 11:57 a.m., Mahathir said.

"It is with great regret and sorrow I announce the death of Yang di-Pertuan Agong Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah," Mahathir said in a nationally televised address, using the Malay title for the monarch.

The king in Malaysia holds mostly ceremonial powers, and Salahuddin's death does not affect the functioning of the government.

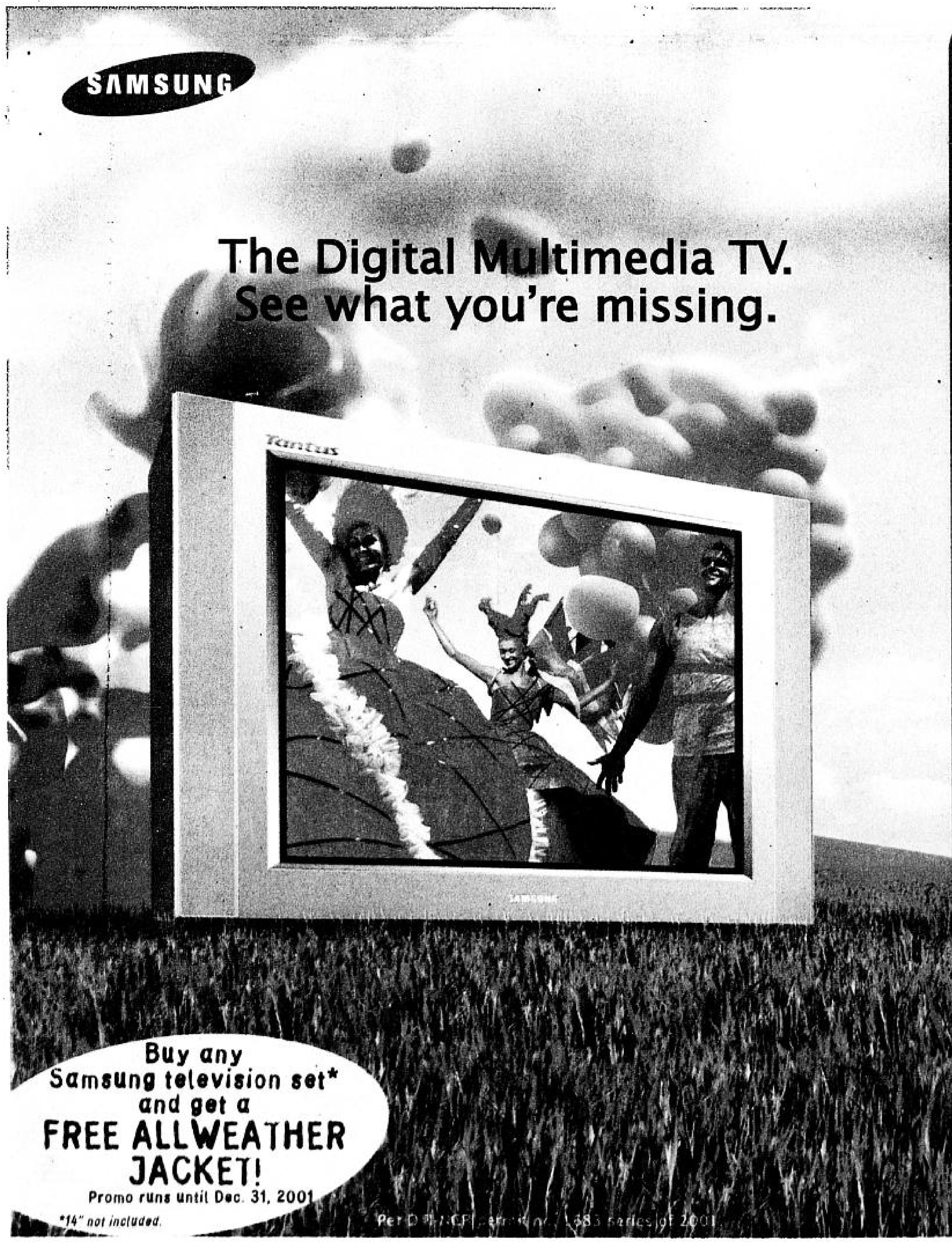
Salahuddin assumed the throne in 1999 under Malaysia's unique royal rotation system which chooses the king by secret ballot among the sultans of Malaysia's nine states.

Each sultan takes a turn as the monarch of this Southeast Asian nation for a five-year term.

If a monarch dies in office, the deputy king steps in until the sultans meet to choose a new monarch. In three previous cases where the king has died in office—including Salahuddin's father in 1960—the No. 2 has been elected as the new king.

Terengganu state's sultan, Mizan Zainal Abidin, has been acting king since Salahuddin was hospitalized in early October for heart surgery.

Mahathir declared Thursday a national holiday and said all government functions would be canceled Wednesday and Thursday. A seven-day mourning period was declared and Malaysians were urged to flay their flags at half-staff. *AP*



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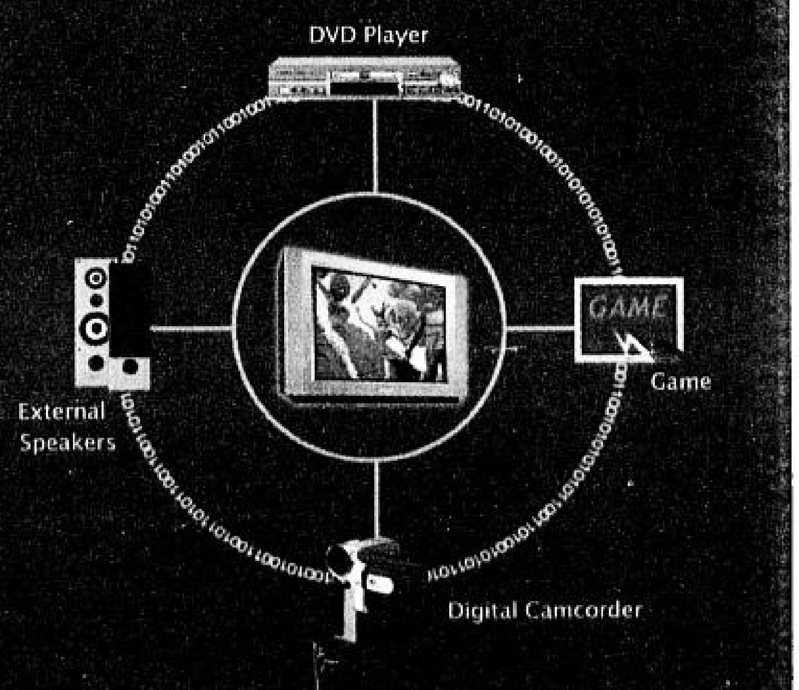

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Letter to senator contained billions of anthrax spores

WASHINGTON—A letter to Sen. Patrick Leahy was laced with billions of anthrax spores, authorities said, as a suspected case of the most deadly form of the disease mysteriously appeared in Connecticut.

An elderly woman in a rural area of the state preliminarily tested positive for inhalation anthrax, the first suspected case in several weeks.

The woman, in her 90s, was hospitalized in critical condition as authorities awaited additional test results from the federal government.

"It's difficult to explain how the person contracted anthrax," Connecticut Gov. John Rowland said Tuesday. "There is no evidence they contracted the disease as a result of a criminal act."

Four Americans have died and 13 have been sickened by anthrax since early October. If confirmed, the Connecticut case would be the first instance of inhaled anthrax since a New York City hospital employee died Oct. 31.

FBI spokesperson Lisa Bull said agents were not officially treating the case as anthrax until the disease had been confirmed by the CDC.

The woman was admitted Friday to Griffin Hospital with a respiratory ailment, hospital president Patrick Charmel said.

Doctors initially suspected she had pneumonia..

In Washington, trace amounts of anthrax were found in the mailrooms of two congressional offices and FBI agents and scientists began their analysis of the Leahy letter found last week.

An FBI microbiologist, speaking on condition of anonymity, said there were easily billions of anthrax spores in the letter addressed to Leahy. Scientists have said 8,000 to 10,000 spores are enough to infect a person with inhalation anthrax.

An investigator who found the Leahy letter in a bin of unopened congressional mail Friday night could feel powder inside the envelope, the microbiologist said. A two-minute test of the plastic garbage bag that was used to hold the Leahy letter detected 23,000 anthrax spores, he said.

That letter was postmarked Oct. 9, around the time a similar anthrax-tainted letter was sent to Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle.

Postal Inspector Dan Mihalko said the Leahy letter never got to the senator's office because it was quarantined along with all other Senate mail after the discovery of the Daschle letter.

Mihalko said there was an "extremely high probability" that the Leahy letter was misrouted on Oct. 12 to a state department mail facility in Sterling, Virginia, where a worker came down with inhalation anthrax. *AP*

Whereabouts unclear of Falun Gong protesters

BEIJING—Chinese police refused Wednesday to say where they were holding about three dozen Westerners detained for demonstrating in Beijing's Tiananmen Square against China's crackdown on the banned Falun Gong spiritual sect.

Swedish Ambassador Kjell Anneling said China's Foreign Ministry informed his Embassy that protesters would be deported on the first available flight. He said the Chinese didn't specify where protesters were being held, where they would be flown to or whether they would be expelled together.

Anneling said seven Swedes were among those who staged Tuesday's demonstration, in which participants sat in the lotus position, chanted and unveiled a banner. Swedish diplomats have asked to meet with protesters, he said.

Official Chinese media said Tuesday that 35 protesters were detained, given warnings and would be expelled for breaking Chinese laws on protest and assembly as well as defying the ban on Falun Gong, which China calls an "evil cult."

As Chinese tourists stood by, police pushed demonstrators into vans and drove them off the square, China's symbolic political heart and a favorite venue for protests by Falun Gong practitioners. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Talks with new envoy

JERUSALEM—Israelis and Palestinians prepared Tuesday for talks with the newly-appointed US Mideast envoy, a tough retired Marine general who is expected to press the two sides to stop more than a year of fighting. Anthony Zinni takes his first steps into a century-old dispute that 14 months ago exploded in violence that has resisted successive US ceasefire efforts. He is expected to arrive with US Assistant Secretary of State William Burns at the beginning of next week, Israeli and Palestinian officials said. There was some expectation here that Zinni, as a career military man with wide experience in the region, might be more effective than past mediators. Zinni might press his advantage as an ex-general to talk strategy with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, also a retired military man, while speaking to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in his own language. *AP*

Ex-president freed

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina—Former president Carlos Menem was freed from house arrest on Tuesday amid raucous celebrations by supporters, cleared by Argentina's Supreme Court of charges he had led an illicit arms smuggling ring while in office. The decision dealt a setback to efforts to prosecute the flamboyant, two-term president in one of several corruption scandals that tarnished his legacy in the final years of his decade in power. Freedom also appeared to revive Menem's political fortunes, leaving him free to reassert his role as the country's pre-eminent opposition leader at a time when President Fernando de la Rua is growing increasingly unpopular for his handling of a deep economic crisis. Menem's supporters in his opposition Peronist party pounded on his black limousine and shouted "Justice has been done!" as the 71-year-old leader pulled up at the suburban villa—his gilded prison for the past six months—after a courthouse appearance to advise him of his release. *AP*

Detention camp afire

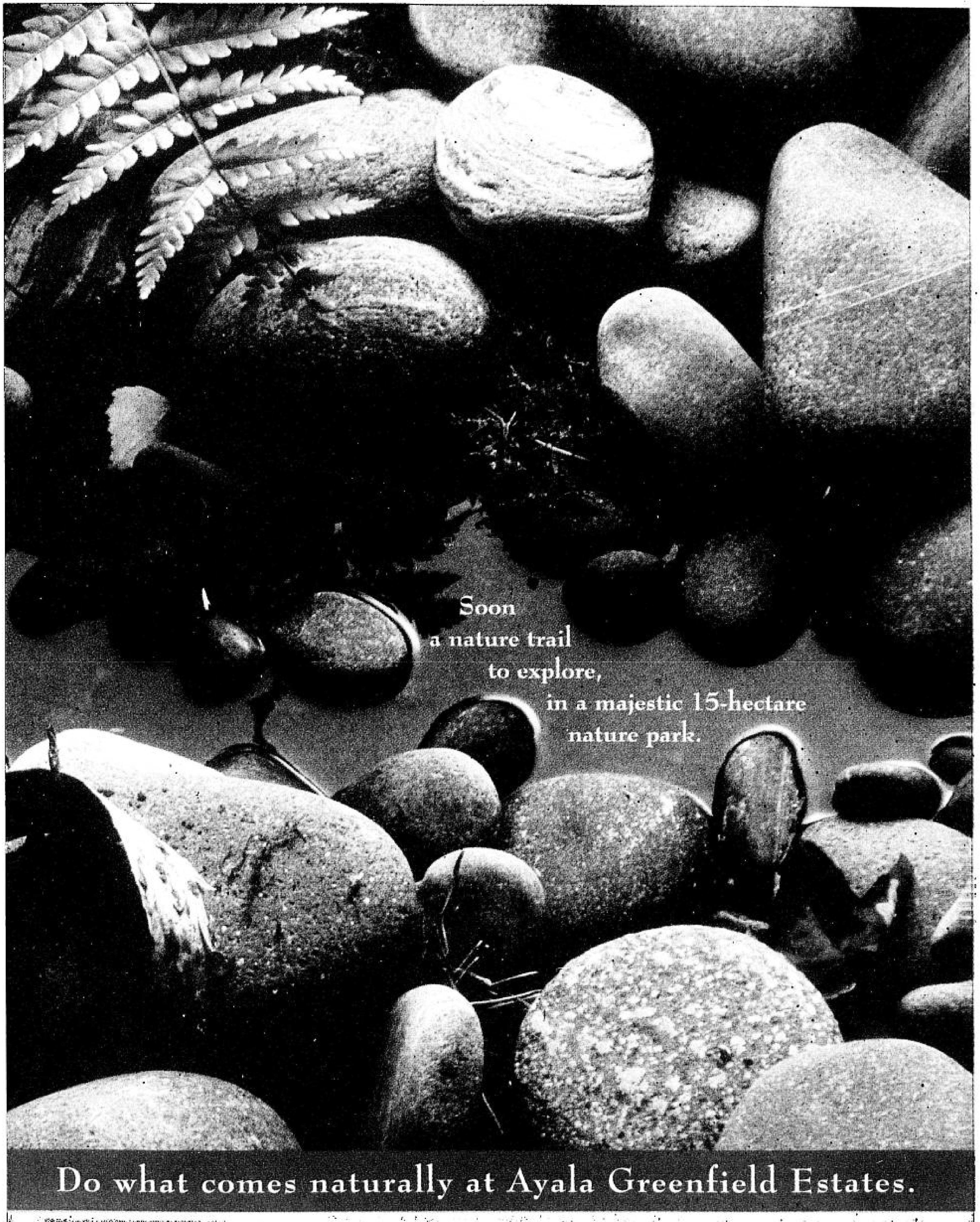
CANBERRA—Asylum seekers set fire to three buildings during an overnight protest in a detention camp, the government said Wednesday. "We believe they were deliberately lit, yes, they weren't accidental," Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock told Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio. About three buildings in the Woomera camp were damaged but no one was hurt, Ruddock said. Located in the remote central Australian desert area in the north of South Australia state, Woomera holds about 1,000 asylum seekers. *AP*

Protests in Buenos Aires

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina—Union workers fearful of yet another round of punishing austerity measures staged noisy protests Tuesday, opposing government attempts to resurrect the economy through deep spending cuts. Argentina's second-largest labor confederation, led by teamster leader Hugo Moyano, organized the march by thousands of angry demonstrators to the Government House, just one day after Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo embarked on a crucial debt swap. Meanwhile, Argentine stocks took a beating Tuesday on rising investor concern about the country's ability to handle its huge $132-billion national debt, which represents 50 percent of GDP. Blue-chip shares on the leading Merval Index plunged 6.1 percent to 204.87. Bonds also declined sharply. The deterioration in the markets came after Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo reported late Monday that the government would miss its $6.5-billion yearend fiscal deficit target, set with the International Monetary Fund. The country will instead post a fiscal deficit of $7.8 billion this year, Cavallo said. *AP*

Bodies arrive in Pakistan

TORKHAM, Pakistan—The bodies of four international journalists were brought out of Afghanistan in wooden coffins on Wednesday, two days after the group was ambushed by gunmen on the road to Kabul. Red Cross workers escorted the coffins in two jeeps from the Afghan city of Jalalabad to the Torkham border crossing into Pakistan. There, they were transferred to a truck to continue the journey to the Pakistani city of Peshawar. Anti-Taliban militiamen recovered the bodies Tuesday near the town of Serobi, 55 km east of Kabul. They were held overnight in a hospital in Jalalabad. The journalists were Australian television cameraman Harry Burton and Azizullah Haidari, an Afghan photographer, both of the Reuters news agency; Maria Grazia Cutuli of Italian newspaper Corriere della Sera; and Julio Fuentes of the Spanish daily El Mundo. *AP*



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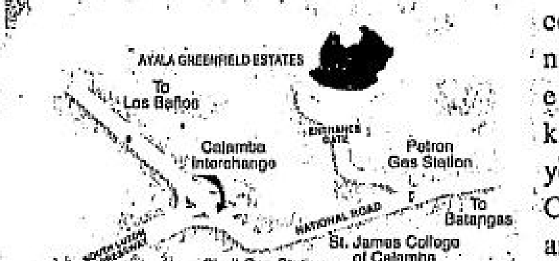

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TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

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c/o Cebu Daily News
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Cop in coup rumor shuns new post

BY NESTOR P. BURGOS JR.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The chair of the Young Officers Union (YOU) has failed to report for work more than three weeks after he was reassigned here.

Chief Supt. Rolando Garcia said Supt. Rafael Cardeño would be dropped from the roster of PNP personnel if he fails to report within 30 days after his reassignment took effect.

The order for Cardeño's reassignment took effect Oct. 26 but was received by the PNP regional office only early this month, Garcia said.

But Garcia said he is still verifying reports that Cardeño filed a leave of absence at the PNP Headquarters in Camp Crame.

Cardeño was reassigned to an unspecified post in the Western Visayas police office days after he met with President Macapagal-Arroyo amid reports linking YOU leaders to coup plans. Another of the group's leader, Supt. Diosdado Valeroso, was assigned to the Western Mindanao Command.

Days before talking with the President, Cardeño was detained for 10 hours in Camp Crame last month where he was questioned on his alleged involvement in the reported coup plans against the then nine-month-old Macapagal administration.

Cardeño was special assistant to retired Brig. Gen. Edgardo Abenina, chief of the Land Transportation Office, while Valeroso worked as special assistant to the executive director of the Philippine Center on Transnational Crimes.

Both Cardeño and Valeroso had denied the coup rumors and declared their support for the Arroyo administration.

Garcia said he needs to talk to Cardeño "to find out his strengths and weaknesses" before assigning him to a specific position.

Garcia said he does not consider Cardeño's alleged involvement in coup plans a problem. "It depends on how you handle a person."

But in an earlier interview with the INQUIRER, Senior Supt. Wilfredo Blanco, deputy regional director for administration, said they do not know where to assign the YOU leader as there is no vacant position in the regional office suited to his rank.

Palace officials had accused the opposition of being involved in the coup rumors, but opposition leaders denied it.

The Macapagal administration first came under threat during Edsa 3 when supporters of ousted President Joseph Estrada stormed the Palace gates.

Hundreds of Estrada supporters marched to Malacañang after taking part in a rally on Edsa to demand that Estrada be freed from prison and charges against him be dropped.

The ouster of Estrada, according to his supporters, was also a form of coup.

The Estrada administration collapsed following the resignation of top military officials.

The most coup attempts launched was during the administration of former President Corazon Aquino, who suffered at least seven coup attempts.

The most successful was in 1989 when renegade soldiers led by now Sen. Gregorio Honasan occupied key military installations and nearly succeeded in toppling Ms Aquino.

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1st of series of raps filed against Chavit

VIGAN CITY—The first of a series of cases against former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson was filed on Wednesday at the Ombudsman.

The Save Ilocos Sur Alliance, led by its president Nestor Segismundo, secretary general David Roca and member Araial Ilustre, filed graft charges against Singson and five others for the provincial government's alleged ghost purchase of a P9.5-million backhoe in 2000.

Charged with Singson were Ilocos Sur Gov. Deogracias Victor Savellano, general service officer Dr. Enrie Mendoza, provincial administrator Ma. Victoria Cu, provincial budget officer Erlita Arce and provincial treasurer Antonio Gundran.

Except for Singson, the complainants asked the Ombudsman to suspend the officials implicated in the case.

Singson welcomed the charges and said the case would prove who is telling the truth.

"They have been telling the same stories. I welcome it so that we would know who is telling the truth," he told the INQUIRER.

But Singson claimed that the filing of cases against him was part of the plan of former President Joseph Estrada and his group to discredit witnesses like him in the plunder case against the former president.

He also said that it was part of the "grand plan to stage a coup this December." He did not elaborate.

"With the start of the filing of charges against the former governor, definitely the law will soon catch up with him," said lawyer Estelita Cordero, Metro Manila Sisa coordinator and member of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines-Ilocos Sur chapter.

"I hope that the Ombudsman will act expeditiously on the case to do justice for the people of Ilocos Sur," she said.

Segismundo said: "We are fed up (with) being accused by former Governor Singson of being liars and fabricators. We will now find out who is telling the truth in a proper court of law," Segismundo told the INQUIRER.

The complainants, in their six-page complaint, said documents showed that a certificate of inspection on the backhoe and an acceptance of delivery was signed by Mendoza and Singson.

In January 2001, a representative from the Commission on Audit's technical audit section inspected the delivery of the equipment but found that the backhoe was never delivered.

Provincial officials told COA representatives that there was actual delivery but that the backhoe was allegedly returned due to supposed defects found during the inspection.

The complainants said, however, the provincial officials could not produce proof that the backhoe was returned to its supplier, the Compressed Air Machineries and Equipment Corp. (Camec).

There was no demand made to Camec to either replace, repair or reimburse the province of Ilocos Sur the amount of P9.5 million representing the cost of the backhoe.

No steps had been taken to either obtain a replacement or recover the amount of P9.5 million.

Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Robbery foiled; 8 suspects held

CAMP ADDURU, Tuguegarao City—Police arrested eight men who allegedly tried to rob the Philippine National Bank branch in Sanchez Mira town on Monday night.

Chief Supt. Dominador Resos Jr., Cagayan Valley regional director, said the eight suspects were arrested by policemen from Aparri, Lallo and Gattaran towns and the 1st provincial mobile group with the help of bank employees.

Seized from the suspects were two Armalite rifles, two .45 cal. pistols and a .38 cal. revolver. Also recovered were a maroon Honda Civic and a green Nissan Sentra.

Resos identified the suspects as Army Sgt. Ceferino Morales, Ronaldo Orpilla, Eduardo Quiban, Nick Bautista, Jaime Bautista, Romulo Auingan, Nelson Hidalgo and Richard Mecate.

Morales, a member of the Army's 17th Infantry Battalion based in Abra but has gone on absence without official leave (Awol), is the leader of the group, Resos said.

Supt. Ricardo Padilla, Cagayan police director, said the robbery was foiled when at about 6:30 p.m., bank teller Gwendolyn Ziganay went to the bank's back door but was surprised to see four armed men inside the bank's compound.

Ziganay immediately went inside the bank and locked its door. This prevented the robbers from entering the bank.

When bank accountant Pat Abad arrived and employees started calling the police for assistance, the suspects fled in two cars.

The PNB driver, who tailed the cars, alerted the police detachment in Barangay Magapit in Lallo.

Police set up a dragnet and established checkpoints along the possible route of the suspects.

Estanislao Caldez and Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Bicol region, Visayas, Mindanao and Palawan will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over Eastern Visayas, Northeastern Mindanao and Southern Palawan. The rest of Luzon will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers. SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 21°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	HI 21° Lo 11°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	HI 30° Lo 18°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 20°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	HI 30° Lo 20°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	HI 29° Lo 19°
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	HI 28° Lo 24°
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	HI 29° Lo 21°
Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains	HI 28° Lo 24°
Roxas	Cloudy with Rains	HI 30° Lo 27°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	HI 28° Lo 24°
Tacloban	Widespread Rains	HI 28° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	HI 32° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	HI 32° Lo 25°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	HI 29° Lo 23°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	HI 30° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Loyesa, PDI Research/11/22/01

ROUNDUP

Coke workers protest

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Workers of Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. staged a picket to protest the company's early retirement package and contractualization scheme.

Andrew Casiño, national president of the Alliance of Coca-Cola Unions of the Philippines, said the company is offering early retirement to contract out jobs performed by regular employees. The company increased the early retirement package from 175 percent to 200 percent this year. Casiño said other labor unions in the Philippines would stage a similar protest rally.

Ellen Red, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Grenade thrower nabbed

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Police in Sultan Kudarat province arrested a resident of Monkayo, Davao del Norte who was allegedly behind the grenade throwing in Isulan town on Tuesday. Senior Supt. Bartolome Baluyot yesterday said Jerry Villagracia alias Borong, lobbed two hand grenades at the terminal of the Yellow Bus Lines. The grenades failed to explode but it caused panic among commuters and passersby. Baluyot said he has ordered the investigation of the case, as it was unusual for a man to play with explosives.

Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

'Sabungero' shot dead

TIAONG, Quezon—A cockfighting aficionado was shot dead by two motorcycle-riding suspects on Sunday in front of the Castillo Cockpit Arena outside the poblacion. Police said the victim, identified as Rexon Soriano, 21, was talking with his father when the suspects appeared from behind and shot the victim in the back of the head. Soriano instantly died from bullet wounds. The gunmen escaped toward Candelaria town. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

NPA kills cop

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Four suspected New People's Army rebels shot dead SPO4 Loreto Macolor, Roxas town deputy chief of police at 7:30 a.m., Tuesday, near his house in Sitio Malatgao, Barangay Magara, Roxas. Insp. Hernan Teologia, Roxas police chief, said Macolor was on his way to work when four persons shot him. Macolor was the third police officer to be killed in the province. *Ruelle Albert Castro, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Composting project

LUCBAN, Quezon—This town is now set to implement its garbage composting project in a three-hectare dump in Barangay Calyaat, just outside the town proper. Mayor Serafin Dator said the local government has received P1-million from the Department of Agriculture for the project. The local government has also allocated P3 million for the project. He said the project would help farmers with their fertilizer needs.

Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

5 holdup men fall

SAN PABLO CITY—Police have arrested five holdup men who robbed a gasoline station and a cell phone user here on Oct. 29. Two of the suspects—Arturo Cabatay, 36, of Barangay Palagahan, Tiaong, Quezon, and Victor Villena, 22, of Barangay Guadalupe I, here—were positively identified by the cashier of Petron Wellentina Gas Station in Barangay San Roque here as the ones who robbed him of P10,000. Police also arrested Espelito Catapang, 21; Jayson Catapang, and Oscar de Castro, 23, suspects in robbing Danilo Dacanay, 22, of his Nokia 3310 cell phone unit.

Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Mayor denies charge

CANDELARIA, Quezon—Mayor David Emralino has denied Sen. Panfilo Lacson's allegation that he is an illegal gambling lord. Lacson claimed in a speech last week that several top police officials had been accepting jueteng *payola* from the country's illegal gambling lords. He named Emralino as one of the big-time jueteng operators. "I have been the mayor here for more than 12 years but my constituents could attest that I have never been involved in illegal gambling," Emralino said.

Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Nene's dream of peace

SEN. Aquilino Pimentel is no Santa Claus but he has a gift for budding artists this Christmas season. An on-the-spot competition, dubbed as "Art for Peace" will be held on Dec. 22 at the Robinson's Place Manila for children 6 to 15 years old. The project seeks to express the youth's ideals of peace especially during these conflict-ridden times. Registration forms may be obtained from all National Bookstore outlets and may be faxed to Pimentel's office at 552-67-13.

PEACE AND ORDER REPORT

Rebel influence growing, says PNP

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The number of barangays affected by the communist insurgency in Western Visayas has risen dramatically this year, a report of the Philippine National Police showed.

The PNP and the Armed Forces of the Philippines are bracing for intensified rebel activities especially from the mainstream rebel group led by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing the New People's Army (NPA).

Chief Supt. Rolando Garcia, PNP regional director, said in a security briefing that out of the total 4,048 barangays in the region, 220 or 5.43 percent are affected by the insurgency.

The figure is up by 172 or 358 percent from last year's figure of 48 barangays.

Garcia gave the briefing to more than 100 participants of a two-day regional forum on peace and order that ended Tuesday. The participants were mostly members of the PNP, local government officials, and representatives from national government agencies and non-government organizations.

Garcia said that of the number of affected barangays, 203 are considered "infiltrated" and 17 "influenced."

In police and military parlance, a barangay is "infiltrated" if there is a presence of rebels trying to establish an organized mass base. A barangay is "influenced" when there is a marked activity of rebels and when there is already an attempt to form a political structure or "shadow government."

In 1998, there were 58 insurgency-affected, 45 infiltrated and seven influenced. The figure rose slightly in 1999 with 89 insurgency-affected barangays, 79 considered infiltrated and 10 influenced.

Last year, the insurgency-affected barangays dropped to 48 with 45 considered infiltrated and 3 influenced.

Supt. Isagani Cuevas, chief of the regional operations and planning department of the PNP in Western Visayas, said the sharp increase in affected barangays does not mean a rebound in rebel strength.

"They (rebels) just spread out their personnel to cover more areas," said Cuevas, adding that the additional barangays were areas previously organized by the rebels.

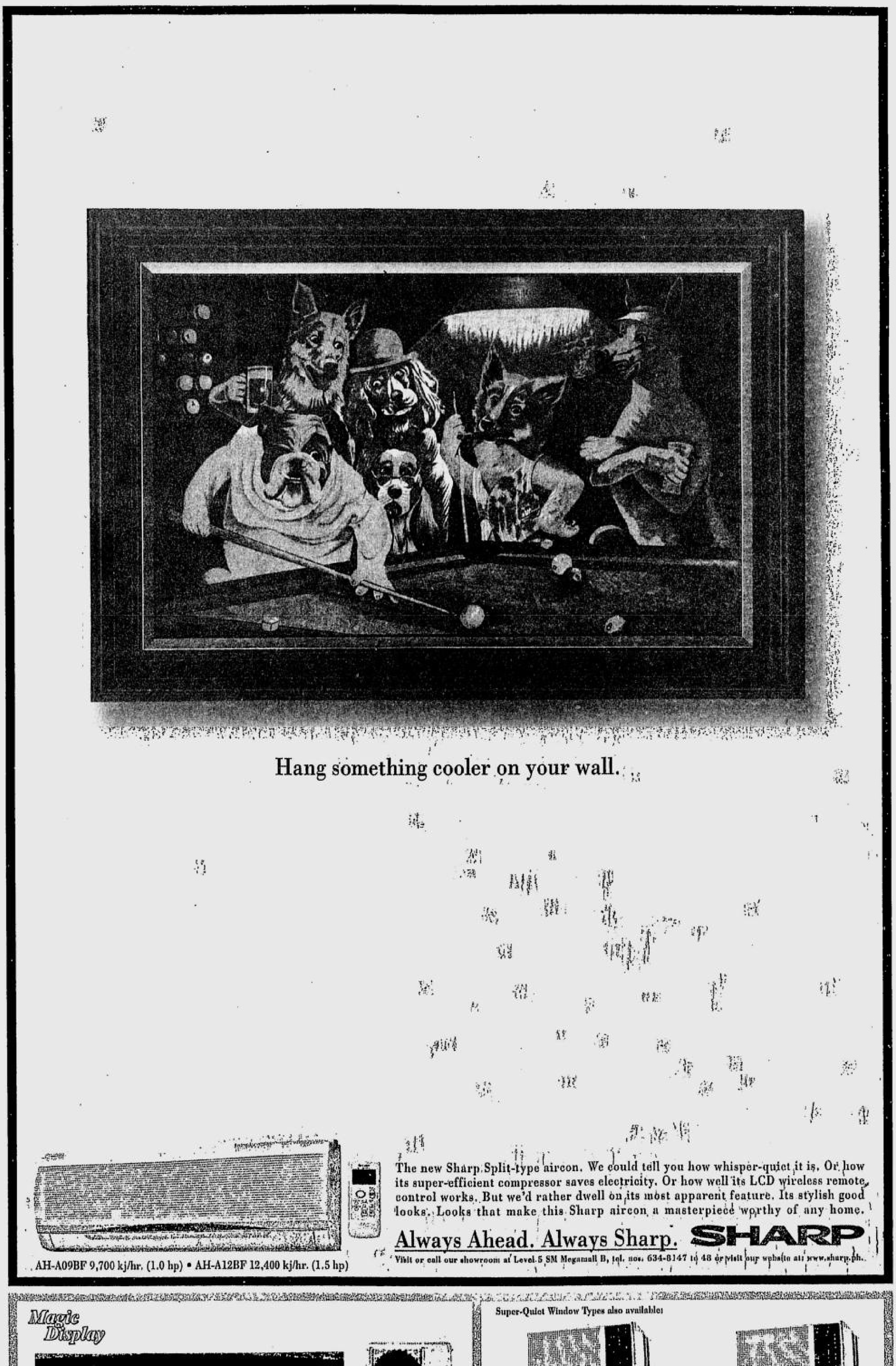
Garcia placed the combined strength of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB) and the CPP-NPA in the region at 1,011 with 727 firearms for the second quarter of this year. The figure is slightly lower than the 1,015 rebels with 750 firearms recorded during the first quarter.

In Panay, Garcia placed rebel strength at 187 with 149 firearms in the second quarter down from 299 with 248 firearms in the first quarter. There was a slight increase in Negros Occidental at 824 with 578 firearms in the second quarter from 716 with 502 firearms in first quarter.

There were 17 clashes between government forces and the CPP-NPA this year. The CPP-NPA initiated seven of the clashes while 10 were launched by government troops.

Despite a peace pact with the government and the RPA-ABB, there were three reported encounters between Army and the RPA-ABB.

Garcia said that despite the increase in affected barangays, the communist movement suffered "severe blows" due to the capture and killing of top CPP-NPA leaders and members, including the arrest of Reynaldo Bocala, the alleged deputy secretary of the CPP-NPA in Panay.



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3-day air strikes kill 113 in Sulu

(From page A1)

Undersecretary Manuel Sanchez said. The President is also expected to visit Tawi-Tawi over the weekend.

According to an Agence France Presse photographer who witnessed the attack, two OV-10 planes dropped bombs on rebel positions in the wooded hills in Patikul town early in the afternoon, while two MG-520 attack helicopters followed through with rocket fire.

Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu, chief of the Southern Command of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, told reporters that more military aircraft, including F-5 fighter jets, would attack Misuari's forces.

At least three SF260 bomber planes have arrived at the Edwin Andrews Airbase in Zamboanga City and will soon be dispatched here to join the air strikes.

About eight Army and Marine battalions, made up of some 4,000 soldiers, are pursuing Misuari and his 600-odd fighters through the towns of Panamao, Indanan and Patikul. The Navy has already stationed gunships in Mindanao Sea to prevent the rebels from fleeing to Malaysia.

Cimatu vowed to crush Misuari and his renegade Moro National Liberation Front faction.

"We are slowly driving them out into an isolated place to avoid civilian casualties," Cimatu told reporters here.

Misuari, the MNLF founder who signed a peace agreement with the national government in 1996, mounted a fresh rebellion on Monday in a bid to stop the ARMM elections on Nov. 26.

The death toll from the revolt has since risen to 113, including at least 100 rebels, Cimatu said yesterday. "As per body count and reports from the field, the enemy suffered fatalities not lower than 100, most of them inflicted by our air strikes," he said.

The military suffered six dead while seven civilians were killed in the crossfire, he added.

Nur wounded?

Cimatu also said he had received a report that Misuari was wounded in an air attack, but added that the military could not yet confirm it.

"We received that report but we cannot confirm it unless he'll show up in a hospital," Cimatu told defense reporters in a telephone interview.

"That's the report we got from civilians in Jolo proper that he's wounded . . . Maybe they have a way of knowing these things but on the military side, we cannot confirm it," he added.

In another briefing, Cimatu said "there are persistent reports that Misuari is wounded," but there was no physical confirmation or a description of his supposed injury.

But Army division commander Maj. Gen. Glicerio Sua said the military believed Misuari was in fact wounded and was hiding somewhere in Parang. He warned the governor that he would be "blasted out of the water" if he tried to flee to nearby Sabah in Malaysia in one of his speedboats.

"If we ever see the Volvo (speedboat) of Misuari, too bad for him," Sua said.

Security was heavy in downtown Jolo, with dozens of police and military personnel armed with assault rifles patrolling key intersections to thwart further attacks.

Shops were shut and some houses were gutted or heavily damaged by shells and bullets after Monday's firefight.

Cimatu said some 4,500 soldiers were now going after Misuari and his men, and another 2,000 would arrive in the coming days. He said there was "sporadic fighting" in Patikul, Panamao and Indanan, adding that there were at least three firefights Tuesday and Wednesday.

"We know where Misuari's group is. They cannot hide. We will pursue them," he added.

He said two more soldiers had been killed and three wounded, raising military casualties in three days of fighting to six dead and 30 wounded. Seven civilians were killed and 48 were wounded in the crossfire, he added.

The provincial governor, Yusop Jikiri, said the fighting displaced about 10,000 people.

ARMM complex

The military also ordered Misuari's armed supporters camped out at a government complex in Zamboanga City to leave the place or face eviction.

But the supporters said they would fight any attempt to expel them from Cabatangan, a complex where Misuari administered the autonomous Muslim region.

Military spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan did not say if the military gave them a deadline.

Randolph Parcasio, spokesperson of the armed group, said his guards would not leave Cabatangan and would "be forced to defend themselves" if the military tried to evict them.

"There's enough force there to secure the property," he said, adding that the Army has no authority to force them to leave.

It wasn't clear how many of Misuari's supporters were in the building, but dozens of men armed with assault rifles were seen there before the evacuation order, patrolling and taking up positions on rooftops.

It was not also clear what effect Misuari's statement disowning the attacks last Monday had on his supporters in Cabatangan.

"The recent skirmishes in Sulu between the Bangsamoro Armed Forces-MNLF and the AFP were actually offshoots of (the) AFP and (the) PNP's gross arrogance and provocative show of ground, air and naval force over and around the MNLF camp in Silangkan, which preempted MNLF mujahideen to fight back amid dangers of possible escalation not just in Sulu but in Mindanao as a whole even during this holy month of Ramadan," Misuari said in a statement.

Dr. Abdurahman Amin, the MNLF's permanent liaison officer to the Organization of Islamic Conference, confirmed the veracity of the statement.

However, Dr. Parouk Hussin of the MNLF Council of 15, the group that ousted Misuari as chair of the erstwhile rebel movement and the Macapagal administration's official candidate to replace Misuari as regional governor, said he believed Misuari was involved in the attack.

"If he has no involvement, then why is he hiding?" Hussin said.

Misuari said that, contrary to reports, he was not hiding and that he did not flee the country. He did not say, however, whether he was in Cotabato City, the seat of the ARMM, or elsewhere.

Mahendra Majilon, a spokesperson for Misuari, said "Governor Misuari is in Parang (Sulu)." Parang is about 22 km from here and is considered by Misuari's faction as one of its strongholds.

Legal action

In Malacañang, Interior Secretary Joey Lina said the government was poised to file rebellion charges against Misuari today to effect his immediate arrest.

"Before the day is over, rebellion charges will be filed against Governor Misuari and his followers," Lina said after attending another emergency meeting in the Palace yesterday afternoon.

He said the PNP had already interviewed several witnesses such that "the exact involvement of Governor Misuari has been determined."

"He's the leader. He led the attack. He's a leader of the group. He doesn't have to be there to lead it," Lina said when asked about Misuari's involvement in Monday's attack on the 104th Infantry Brigade headquarters in this town.

In the same press briefing, Justice Undersecretary Jose Calida said the charges would be filed in Sulu.

But even without an arrest warrant issued by a court, Calida said Misuari could be arrested anytime. "If he's caught right now because there are pursuit operations, for the act of rebellion he can be arrested even without a warrant," he said.

He said the justice department was still determining whether the charges should be filed in the prosecutor's office for preliminary investigation, or before a municipal trial court.

"The government will not allow any renegade government official to rebel with impunity. And therefore we are taking these measures to let the public know that we will not tolerate anyone, whether a ranking official or a lowly official, (who is) flouting the law with impunity."

"That's the message we are sending to Governor Misuari," Calida said.

Ms Macagapal had ordered her officials to file charges yesterday morning. By then, officials said, she had no more doubt that Misuari was behind the attack.

Presidential spokesperson, Rigoberto Tiglao said Ms Macapagal took the recommendation of Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo and Presidential Legal Adviser Avelino Cruz to forgo the preventive suspension option.

Romulo and Cruz reportedly pointed out that a suspension would "require a lot of bureaucratic procedures" whereas the filing of charges would immediately produce an arrest warrant.

Earlier in the day, the head of the PNP's criminal investigation group, Chief Supt. Lucas Managuelod, said here that his office was investigating Misuari and some of his top commanders "for possible filing of rebellion charges."

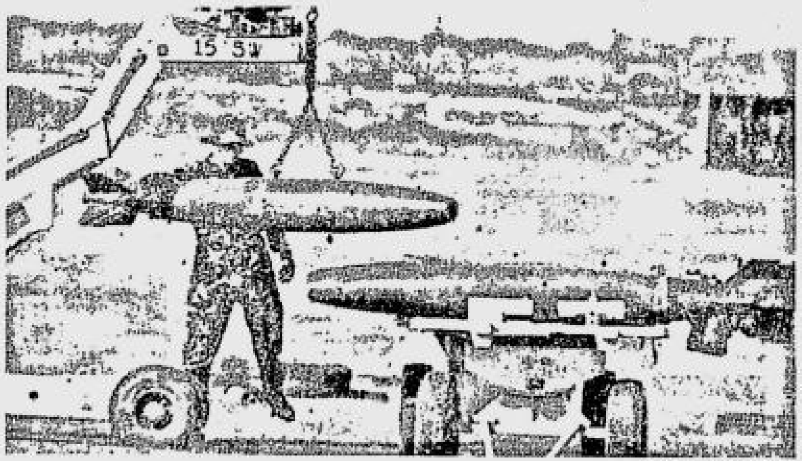
"We have strong evidence against the group and before the end of this week, we will be filing rebellion charges against them including Misuari," Managuelod said.

Tiglao confirmed that Malaysia had offered to intercede, but the government would still have to decide whether to accept such an offer "depend(ing) on what help they really could extend."

"We thank Malaysia for its offer and help to talk to Misuari to give up and cooperate with this government," he said.

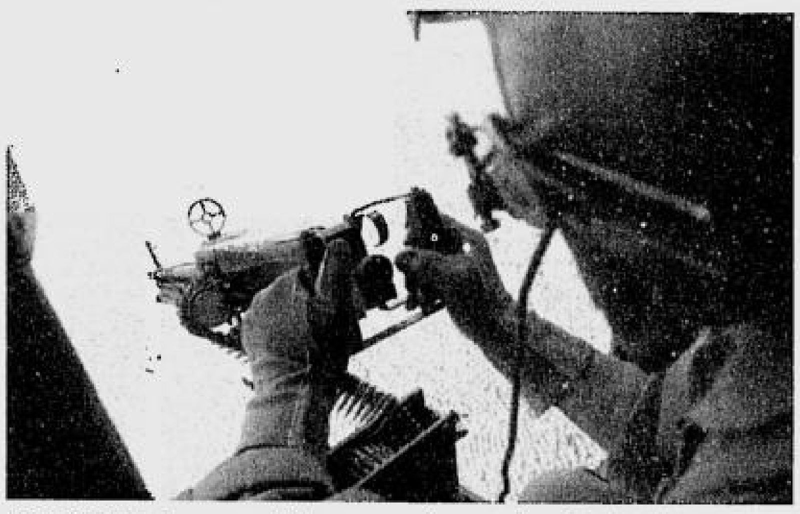
Malaysia chairs the Organization of Islamic Conference's Committee of the Eight that is overseeing the implementation of the 1996 peace agreement. ***Reports from Julie Alipala-Inot, Alexander M. Young and Allan A. Nawal; Hernan P. dela Cruz, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Martin Marfil; and AFP***

IN SEARCH of a safe place from the bombings, little boy sidles up to heavily armed soldiers in Jolo.
VAL HANDUMON

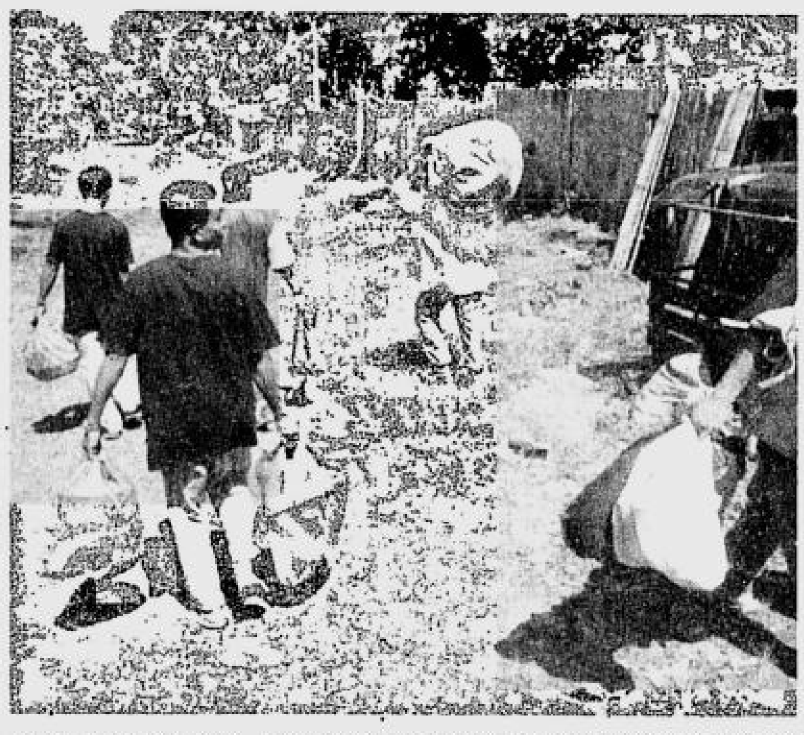


VAL HANDUMON
MORE military aircraft are ready to attack Misuari's forces with at least three SF260 bombers arriving at the Edwin Andrews Airbase in Zamboanga City.

COLLATERAL damage: Abdurajak Dangsalan points to his damaged house in Kasulatan Village in Patikul, Sulu.
VAL HANDUMON



AIR FORCE planes comb the seas and mountains of Patikul following the MNLF attack in Jolo.



DISPLACED families, a by now familiar sight in Patikul after the Misuari attack and three-day retaliatory air strikes.
VAL HANDUMON

Nur . . .

(From page A1)

be able to convince him not to backslide to his old ways."

But Senators Rodolfo Biazon, John Osmena and Manuel Villar supported the steps Malacañang had taken. Osmeña said the preventive suspension order was long overdue, Biazon said that Misuari should now be considered a terrorist, and Villar called what Misuari did a clear act of rebellion and must be condemned by all peace-loving Muslims.

Sen. Edgardo Angara proposed an economic-military-diplomatic offensive as the answer to the Muslim problem in Jolo.

Wadi said two landmark peace pacts were now "hanging in the balance," including a 1996 peace treaty signed by the government with Misuari that gave the 3.6 million-strong Muslim minority a measure of self-rule in five southern provinces.

Wadi said the government-MILF ceasefire agreement signed in Kuala Lumpur in August was also under threat.

"The MNLF and the MILF are like two security guards with shifting schedules—if one takes a nap, the other takes over," he said.

Former Executive Secretary and now Zambales Rep. Ruben Torres said the government had mishandled Misuari.

Torres, a former classmate of the MNLF founder, said it would be difficult for the government to get Misuari back to the negotiating table at this stage.

"The only hope is to get the OIC (Organization of Islamic Conference) to prevail on Misuari," he said. ***With reports from Christine Herrera and AFP***

Ex-soldier bares P100,000 contract on Nida's life

(From page A1)

him P100,000 in cash to kill "Nida, *isang artista* (an actress)," whom she supposedly described as "*matanda na at madaling tepokin* (old already and easy to rub out)."

He asked that his name and address be kept under wraps for reasons of security, but said he would continue to tell what he knew.

He said that he accidentally met Lisa a day earlier at a busy "junction in Manila," and that she was prepared to give him a 50-percent advance payment had he decided then and there to take the "job."

But he did not meet with Lisa anymore because he had to return to Mindanao, the ex-soldier said. "I can identify her if I see her again," he added.

The ex-soldier, a Bicolano and now a resident of Misamis Occidental, said he went to Manila in August in search of a job and stayed with a younger brother. He said his brother advised him to just take another stab at landing a job from among possible openings in February.

He also said his conscience compelled him to come out in the open "because I know that I have something to contribute to the resolution of the case."

At the time of this report lawyer Oscar Tomarong, agent in charge of the National Bureau of Investigation in Dipolog City, had finished taking the man's sworn statement.

Snatching

This was how the ex-soldier told his story:

A day before the contract was offered to him, he set out to follow up on a job opening along with a soldier-cousin.

They saw a man snatching a woman's mobile phone at the corner of 15th Avenue and Aurora Boulevard in Quezon City, and he decided to give chase to the thief.

After a short scuffle he recovered the mobile phone. But the snatcher was able to get away.

He returned the phone to the grateful woman, and they introduced themselves to each other.

Lisa asked him where he and his brother were headed. On learning of his desire to find a job, she proposed that they meet the next day at the same place. He accepted.

At 4 p.m. the next day, Lisa invited him to a Jollibee branch that was within walking distance from where they first met.

There, Lisa told him of a job that was "*isahan lang* (one-time only)." He was stunned when she told him what the job was all about, and the target.

"I might not be able to do it," he told her by way of warding off the offer.

But Lisa insisted, and said she would give him time to think it over.

They agreed to meet again at the fastfood joint a week after. As they parted, Lisa gave him P1,000.

And that was the last time they saw each other.

'Tomboy'

The ex-soldier said that except for the offer of the contract and the target, he and Lisa did not discuss details.

He described Lisa as "*disente* (decent-looking), *bilog ang mukha* (with a round face), a tomboy" and probably moneyed because she drove a "red or maroon" car.

He told his two interviewers that he never thought Lisa was referring to Blanca until he learned about the killing of the actress.

"*Mao na ni* (This is it)!" he recalled saying upon viewing TV reports on the discovery of Blanca's body in her car early on Nov. 7.

Since then, he said, he had not had a good night's sleep.

The ex-soldier said he told his wife the reason for his troubled conscience. He said he also conferred with a number of priests, one of whom scribbled a note and referred him to radio station dxDD here.

On Monday, he visited station manager Fr. Jose Maghinay, and that night he sat down for the interview.

Strunk cries frame-up; 'suspect' abducted

(From page A1)

But Strunk pleaded to the public, the media and the investigators not to believe Medel.

"There is no reason on earth for me to desire the death of the one person I live for," he said in the statement obtained by the INQUIRER from GMA-7. "Without her, I have nothing. Without her, I am nothing."

Martinez

NBI officials were tightlipped about the visit of Martinez's wife. But an investigator said Martinez's abduction had something to do with the Blanca murder.

Police said Martinez was heading to his mother's house on nearby Cattleya Street when he was abducted on Marigold Street between 6 and 7 a.m.

The abductors, who were presumed armed, were on board a Toyota Lite-Ace van with Plate No. WNN-914 or 917, according to reports reaching Camp Crame.

An official of the Parañaque Criminal Investigation Division yesterday admitted that he and other policemen failed to conduct a follow-up operation on the case because they were "overtaken by reports of Medel's surrender."

Since Monday the report on the abduction had been left unnoticed in the police files until reporters inquired about it yesterday, the official said.

Espina said Martinez could have been a possible state witness in the Blanca murder.

He said police investigators had not contacted Martinez because the businessman was supposed to have been handled by the Department of Justice.

It was the DOJ that issued the subpoenas for those linked to the Blanca killing, Espina noted.

"We were hoping that he would crack and admit that he contracted Medel," Espina said. "He was the least guilty, depending on the evaluation of the (DOJ). He was the direct link to Rod. He could have confirmed what happened."

'No fall guy'

But Strunk said he was standing by his "original statement" that he never left the family residence on Nov. 6 and neither made nor received any phone call. He said he did not even have a mobile phone.

"The President herself has told me there will be no fall guy. And yet, here I stand. I am holding on to the President's promise with my life," he said.

He also said: "If the investigation stops here, then justice has not been served—only the satisfaction of the alleged perpetrator being caught.

"Again, I repeat, I am innocent of the horrible crime against my wife and pray we all get to the bottom of it, soon. I have nothing to gain, I have everything to lose. It seems I have nothing to live for now but the truth, and that's worth fighting for.

"God bless the Philippines and the Filipino people. May justice prevail for a woman so loved by a nation, her mother, her daughter, and me."

Not closed

In Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija, PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza said Blanca's murder was not yet being considered a closed case despite Medel's confession.

"It's not yet closed and solved," Mendoza, who attended an awarding ceremony in this Army camp yesterday, told reporters.

He said Task Force Marsha was still gathering more evidence and looking for more suspects.

"We are after the truth and to deliver justice," Mendoza said. "Nobody is pressuring us. The public is very understanding. There was no witness when this incident happened. There are many possible motives. The public understands us."

Mendoza said he did not want the Blanca murder to end up like the celebrated "Vizconde massacre," where so many suspects turned up and fouled the investigation.

"What we want here is the truth," he said. "Who killed Ms Blanca and what really happened? We don't want a fall guy in this case." ***With reports from Martin P. Marfil, Philip C. Tubeza and Christian V. Esguerra in Manila; Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Can't stop 'Paskong Pinoy' on INQ7.net

(From page A1)

Nievera's song "Can't Stop Christmas" as a special online feature of its Christmas portal, Paskong Pinoy.

"One of the freebies on the site is that you can now download Martin Nievera's song," said Dennis Valdes, an INQ7.net board director.

A link on the Christmas portal directs the user to Nievera's "Can't Stop Christmas" page that contains the lyrics of the song and an MP3 download of the song.

It marks the first time that a major Filipino music artist has donated a full song recording for free downloading from the Internet. In the wake of anti-piracy vigilance among performing artists, this seems a grievous sin, but as Nievera's song exhorts, "the magic of Christmas is to give and to believe."

According to the INQ7 introduction, the pop song sums up "Nievera's wish for a Christmas unrelenting and impervious despite wars, political upheavals and economic depression plaguing the country and the world; a season not only for well-wishers and gift-givers but for the strong-willed and resilient."

Through the INQ7 Christmas site, overseas Filipinos can listen to Nievera's heart-tugging paean to the season of love and joy.

"Let's hope they catch the holiday fever," said Gift Gate's Virginia S. Ramos, who hatched the Can't Stop Christmas campaign to get the nation out of a dark, sad time and awaken the Christmas that, as the song puts it, "lives inside of us from season to season."

Sanrio Co. Ltd. in Japan has picked up the Gift Gate campaign. It is featuring Hello Kitty with the words "Can't Stop Christmas" in its special holiday packaging. The company has also started a translation of the song into other Asian languages. A limited edition Sanrio music box featuring Nievera's music is also currently in production.

Although written originally by Nievera exclusively for Ramos and produced by Gift Gate Inc. Philippines, the song is now included in Nievera's latest album "My Souvenirs" from MCA Universal. Multimedia director Rowell Santiago co-wrote the lyrics with Nievera. It was arranged by Louie Ocampo.

At the Glorietta mall in Makati City the other day, Nievera's song was launched with a video presentation focusing on children's Christmas wishes.

Many of the wishes were simple reflections on life at the bottom of the economic ladder. Some kids wanted toys, food, clothes and other small pleasures, but most asked for happiness for the family, to be loved and cared for, even peace on earth. On the whole, they agreed that it would be impossible to postpone Christmas.

The INQ7 special portal provides "a Christmas portal with all things a Filipino Christmas." It includes several Yuletide-related articles like gift tips, Christmas bargains and Noche Buena recipes. It also has e-cards.

Dong Puno live (again) under GMA

(From page A1)

former President Joseph Estrada.

There he was now, looking much at ease as the suave moderator in a televised discussion the other day from Washington between Cabinet officials and Manila-based columnists and radio commentators covering President Macapagal-Arroyo's working visit.

The man who gave up his highly rated TV-show, "Dong Puno Live" on ABS-CBN where he was also its vice president for news and current affairs to join the Estrada Cabinet, seemed right at home with the top officials of the new dispensation.

He may even be given an ambassadorial posting, according to talk circulating in the Palace.

Two of Estrada's political allies have been given prime ambassadorial positions: his lawyer and former Immigrations Commissioner Rufus Rodriguez as envoy to Germany and former Justice Secretary Artemio Tuquero as envoy to Canada.

Until a few months ago, the once high-profile Puno, who quit the Estrada Cabinet to run without success for the Senate, had not been seen or heard from.

All that changed when he became a columnist at the Manila Times which is owned by Ms Macapagal's longtime publicist Dante Ang.

He was identified as a Manila Times columnist during Ms Macapagal's first televised press briefing from New York City last Sunday. He was on the panel of Manila-based newsmen.

But at the next press briefing, Puno was introduced as "co-host" by Radio Veritas station manager Mario Garcia.

Puno and Garcia sat apart from the other newsmen, who were seated to their right while the Cabinet officials were seated on the opposite side.

Puno introduced the Cabinet officials one by one. He called newsmen to ask their questions; he laughed with the Cabinet secretaries over their own jokes. He got the discussion going by raising matter-of-fact but non-critical questions every now and then.

Press Secretary Noel Cabrera and presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao were nowhere in sight during the discussion. Tiglao joined the press briefing the first time.

Manuel Sanchez, press undersecretary for broadcast, yesterday tried to downplay Puno's prominent role in the panel discussion.

He admitted though that the other newsman had chosen Puno to moderate the discussion.

"Dong Puno is a journalist. He's a member of the delegation," he explained.

But he could not answer why Cabrera or Tiglao did not moderate.

"Well that's their (newsmen's) decision. Malacañang had nothing to do with it," he said.

He also said that the Manila-based columnists and commentators had paid for their own way, denying speculations that they were "invited" by Malacañang. Around 80 journalists joined the President's first visit to the United States.

That Puno was among them took newsmen in the presidential entourage by surprise. He had invariably defended Estrada against accusations of bribery, corruption, gambling and womanizing up until he resigned before the year ended to run as senator.

A month later, Estrada was forced to resign by the second Edsa People Power in January.

During the senatorial campaign, Puno continued to defend Estrada and lambasted the manner of his ouster. He joined the so-called "Edsa 3" staged by Estrada's loyal fans last April to restore Estrada to power.

"Mabuhay ang mababaho and mababantot" (Long live the smelly and the stinky), was Puno's memorable rallying cry during the pro-Estrada rally at the Edsa Shrine.

Critics of the rally had criticized the pro-Estrada crowd dominated by the poor, for throwing trash everywhere and using the area as a toilet.

Though Puno did not join the call for the return of Estrada to Malacañang, he concentrated on attacking the critics of Edsa 3.

PUNO: Ambassador?

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For inquiries, contact 811-0837 or visit the 23rd and 24th Floors of the Rufino Pacific Tower, Ayala Ave., Makati or any E. Excel Philippines branch near you.

November 25, 2001 Registration: 3:00 PM
PICC Reception Hall, CCP Complex, Manila

E. EXCEL INTERNATIONAL (PHILIPPINES), INC.
23F Rufino Pacific Tower, 6784 Ayala Avenue, Makati City
Telephone No. 811-0837 Fax No. 811-0825

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BATANG PINOY

Bacolod, Negros in show of force

LIM

BACOLOD and Negros Occidental are fielding huge contingents in the third Philippine National Youth Games-Batang Pinoy set Dec. 1-7 in Bacolod City.

But Laguna and two other cities have been installed strong contenders in the week-long Games being put up by the Philippine Sports Commission through the efforts mainly of Commissioner Amparo "Weena" Lim.

Bacolod is fielding 205 athletes, who will all compete in 15 sports calendared in the third PNYG-Batang Pinoy.

That figure is almost matched by co-host Negros Occidental, which has entered 183 athletes.

Laguna, host of the second edition, is fielding 199.

Cebu City is sending 185 athletes.

So far, 55 of the 115 local sports councils (LSCs) or local government units have sent in their entries to the Batang Pinoy Secretariat, but according to technical committee head Ramon Suzara, the figure could still grow in the next few days, or until registrations are closed on Wednesday.

Commissioner Amparo "Weena" Lim of the Philippine Sports Commission, project director for the third Batang Pinoy, said the turnout falls precisely on what they expect about the Games.

"Despite the stumbling blocks, last minute preparations are going on smoothly," said Lim. "I appreciate the warm response of the LSCs. It only goes to show that the Batang Pinoy has survived its birth pains and is now bucking its growth pains."

Besides the PSC which is generally bankrolling the third Batang Pinoy, the first major national sports competition under the administration of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, the private sector also chipped in its support for the Games that cater to children athletes aged 12 and below.

These are Negros Navigation, PAL, Mikasa, Pascual, National Sports Grill, Philippine Star, Philippine Daily Inquirer, LandBank, Victor, WG&A Philippines, Kix, Asics, Nittaku, Butterfly and Dunlop.

No less than President Macapagal-Arroyo is expected to declare the competition open. Venue will again be the sprawling Panaad Sports Complex.

Other LSCs with significant numbers are Cebu Province with 100, Isabela and Pangasinan 83 each, General Santos 97 and Palawan 88.

Manila is sending 57 athletes and officials, Mandaluyong 26, Malabon 21 and Makati, just one in chess.

Competitions will be in athletics, badminton, boxing, chess, dancesports, football, gymnastics, karatedo, baseball, softball, swimming, lawn tennis, table tennis, taekwondo and volleyball.

HK bets join Taal Regatta

TONG Shing, ranked among the top 3 Hobie sailors in Hong Kong, and veteran Douglas Hansen Luke, will lead the charge of the Crown Colony-based sailors who have confirmed their participation in this weekend's 2nd Sail Round Taal Volcano Governor's Cup Regatta.

"We are expecting four to six sailors from the Hong Kong Hobie Club to be here for this unique experience of sailing inside a live volcano crater," said organizer Peter Capostosto of host Taal Lake Yacht Club in Talisay, Batangas. "Their presence would attest to the international recognition of this new eco-tourism and sports event."

David Robinson, publisher of Asia's top sailing magazine Fragrant Harbour, will be a special guest of the event.

Expected to figure well for the championship are defending champion Luigi Manzi, an Italian expatriate working in Manila, Davao native and Asian Hobie Classic veteran Rex Puertespina and Capostosto himself, who is familiar with the waters of Taal Lake.

"Definitely, the wind conditions we expect in Taal Lake for this 50 kilometer regatta this Saturday will test to the limit the sailing abilities of the competitors because of a growing low pressure area," said Capostosto. "However, this will depend on the actual moments of this typhoon in the next few days."

The event is supported by the provincial government of Batangas, the local government units of Talisay, Laurel and Mataas na Kahoy, DOT-Batangas, Bougainvilla Resort and Puerto Atalaya.

In the side event of the two-day competition, Vice Fajermo, Padoy Fajermo and German Paz, all from Anilao and members of the national team, and defending champion Manny Cabili are expected to lead the Anilao windsurfers to another victory over the Caliraya Windsurfing Fleet, whom they had beaten a week earlier at Lake Caliraya in Laguna.

Jordan suffers 7th loss

WASHINGTON D.C.—Michael Jordan scored 30 points yesterday but again received little support from his teammates as Charlotte beat Washington, 95-88, in the NBA.

The Hornets' Baron Davis scored 32 points and had plenty of help.

The Wizards have lost seven consecutive games–the longest losing streak in Jordan's career–and this time they couldn't beat a team missing its second- and third-leading scorers and whose top scorer, Davis, struggled early before scoring 24 points on 9-for-12 shooting in the second half.

Three other starters scored in double figures for Charlotte, including Lee Nailon's career-high 18 in his first NBA start.

Jordan played 41 minutes and made 13 of 23 shots but committed three of his five turnovers in the decisive third quarter.

Other results: Detroit 88, Toronto 84; Indiana 106, Atlanta 102; Minnesota 80, Miami 73; Seattle 105, Dallas 97; Houston 94, Portland 87; New York 94, Golden State 70; L.A. Lakers 98, L.A. Clippers 93. *AP*

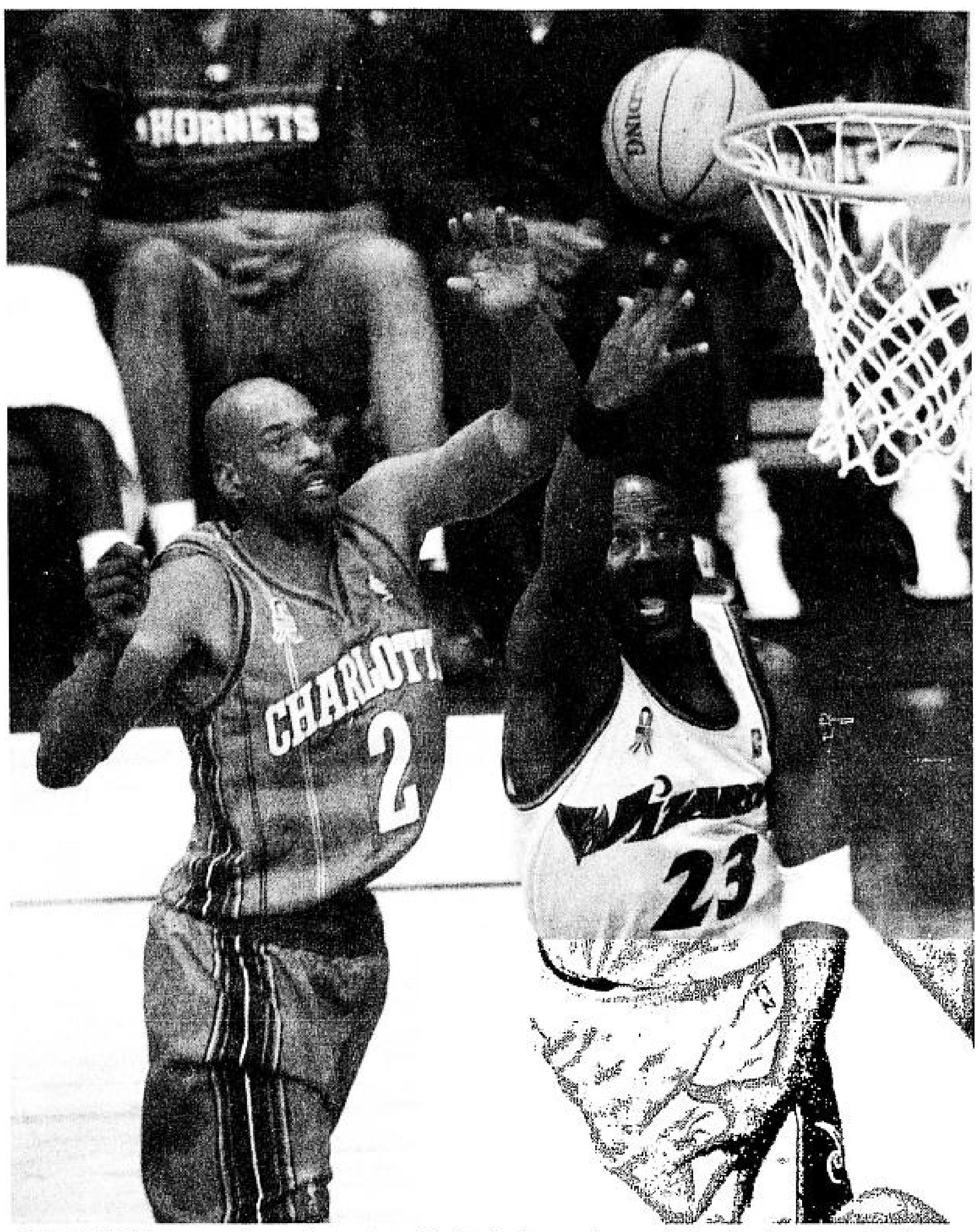
Illegal shorts cause fines for Shaq, Kobe

LOS ANGELES —Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant of the two-time defending champion Los Angeles Lakers were among nine players fined $5,000 for wearing their shorts low during games, according to two league sources who spoke on condition of anonymity.

NBA spokesman Tim Frank confirmed the fines Tuesday, but he wouldn't identify the players.

"It's a rule we enforce to protect the integrity of the uniform," Frank said.

The NBA requires game shorts to be at least an inch (three centimeters) above the knee. The rule began in 1997. *AP*



JORDAN (right) goes up for a shot against Charlotte's Stacey Augmon in the fourth quarter of their game at the MCI Center in Washington. Charlotte won, 95-88, as Washington continues to struggle despite Jordan's unfading shooting abilities. AP

Chan tops Calatagan

ROBERT Chan, president of Atlanta Industries Inc., won the AH Lingayo Surveying light tackle fishing tournament in Calatagan, Batangas, over the weekend, closing in on light tackle Angler of the Year (AOY) frontrunner Benedict Lim.

Chan's victory also moved him closer to Philippine Games Fishing Foundation president and overall AOY leader Rey Buencamino.

Jimmy Flores, of Sigcomm, hooked the heaviest fish, a 3.45 kg garapeche, and won third place with teammate Wilson Tan on 53.18 points. The Lim-Buencamino duo posted 78.64 points. Chan scored 125.91.

Four-time AOY Rico Gueco, Efren Chua Yap, Capt. Ben Solis, and Jimmy Flores all have manta ray or sting ray hook-ups. All broke line or hook after over one hour of fighting.

Top 10 contenders for Light Tackle AOY are Lim, Chan, Buencamino, Bert Lingayo, Crispin Saez, Ferdie Layson, Efren Chua Yap, David Gonzales, Cesar Marcelo and Bert Lingayo Jr.

The Hiyas Press bass fishing tournament caps the 12-leg AOY series Dec. 8-9 at Caliraya Lake. AOY winners will be feted during the PGFF annual awards night on Dec. 18 at Kamayan-Edsa.

For details, call Rose Aberin of PGFF at 373-0743/373-0248 or visit PGFF web site www.pgff.com.ph, or e-mail at pgffrose@edsamail.com.ph.

Barcial bags Scooter plum

CARMONA, Cavite–Jaime Barcial redeemed himself from past setbacks with an impressive victory in the expert open class even as Ivan Santiago completed a sweep of the 50cc categories in the sixth leg of the Shell Advance Super Scooter Championships at the Carmona Racing Circuit here Sunday.

Showing renewed enthusiasm despite back-to-back losses, Barcial outduelled Randy Ortiz, Jolet Jao, Edwin Buenaventura and Mark Chua to capture top honors and move closer to the overall championship in this prestigious seven-part series organized by the E.L. Racing Tech in cooperation with Shell Advance.

The win—the fourth in six races—enabled Barcial to solidify his hold on the overall lead over Chua and Jao with only one leg remaining.

Barcial's younger brother, Mark Anthony Barcial, made it a double celebration when he ruled the equally exciting 70cc category over Santiago, Ortiz, Sonny Villarama and David Concepcion.

Santiago, however, struck back in other categories with a sweep of the Yamaha 50cc and multi-brand 50cc categories over Bart Cruz and R.B. Santos, respectively.

Santiago defeated Cruz, Santos, Hermie Adriano and Robert Altea in the Yamaha-sponsored 50cc class. He returned later in the day to beat Santos, Altea, Eric Ramos and Adriano in the multi-brand 50cc category.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1990, Efren "Bata" Reyes beat Earl Strickland, 9-7, to win the ¥2-million ($15,300) one-on-one 9-Ball Challenge in Osaka. Also today in 1992, Leonardo Andam defeated Asian champion C. Praprut, 4-2, for a smashing opener in the World Snooker Championship in Malta.

Alabang festival on, draws 210 entries

SOME 210 members and dependents of the Alabang Country Club seek top honors from various divisions as the tournament serving as one of the highlights of the 20th anniversary celebration of the prestigious sports center gets going today.

There are 20 husband-and-wife tandems in the roster, 15 father-and-son partnerships and so many other family partnerships battling for top honors in a 36-hole tournament spread out in the four-day duration of the Alabang festivities.

The Alabang anniversary dinner-dance party at the ACC ballroom on Sunday, Nov. 25, is another major highlight since it will be the day when five cars—a Nissan Patrol, a Toyota Corolla Altis, a Nissan Exalta 1500 DS, a Mitsubishi Lancer GLX 1500 and a Honda City—will be raffled off.

The first batch tees off at 6:15 a.m. and the second half at 12 noon for the best ball portion of the competition. The aggregate score will be used for the second round of each team.

"It's really a fun tournament intended to pay tribute to the many families which have nurtured their relationships in the club," said ACCI president Francis Jimenez.

Jimenez added the next four days will not just become an exclusive celebration for the so-called Alabangers as the club also opens its doors to guests and friends who would want to join ACCI's biggest and grandest bash since it opened in 1981.

Smart Communications is the presenter of the Alabang anniversary bash. Insular Life and the Golfers Club Share are major sponsors. Nissan Alabang, Pilipinas Shell, Casino Filipino, H.A. Pastor and the Bank of the Philippine Islands are area sponsors, plus 18 other hole sponsors.

Speedfest winners

LADY drivers Gaby de la Merced and Annaise Fragante, together with Olongapo Councilor Rolen Paulino, took top honors in the Speedfest 2001 Autocross races held last weekend in Subic.

Speedfest 2001 is presented by MP Turbosports Club and SBMA headed by Chairman Felicito Payumo.

The pioneering event is also sponsored by Zed, Gulf Oil, BLTBCo, Gatorade, Gandour Candles, Timex Watches, Rainforest Mineral Water, Daye Motorcycles, Universal Motors Corporation, Mitsubishi Motors/Carworld, Francisco Motors Corporation, Subic LeMans Kart track & the Subic International raceway. Speedfest is sanctioned by the Philippine Motor Association.

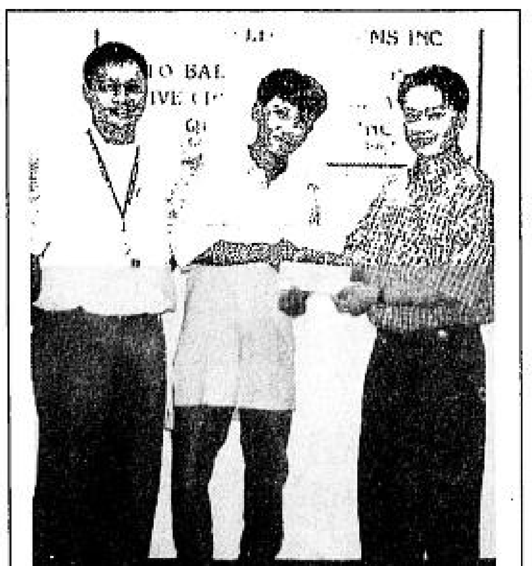
The next leg, to be held on Dec. 1-2, will feature motocross races in the Subic motocross track of Joey Almeda's American Hardware and Kart Clinic in the Subic Le Mans track. For more details, call Toti or Lyn at MP Turbo 8335501, locals 37 and 38.

Mmicaa opens Sunday

THE METRO Manila Inter-Collegiate Athletic Association (Mmicaa) kicks off its fourth season on Sunday, Nov. 25, at 8:30 a.m. at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Ten schools are entered—Miriam College, Chiang Kai Shek College, St. Joseph's College, Siena College, Philippine Normal University, St. Scholastica's College, St. Jude College, University of the Assumption, La Consolacion College, and College of the Holy Spirit.

The participating schools will have two teams (a men's team and a women's team) for each of the following events: basketball, volleyball, billiards, sand volleyball, table tennis, swimming and cheerleading.



CHESS CHAMP

Oliver Dimakiling (center), La Salle's top board player, receives his prize for winning the first ever National Chess Federation of the Philippines active chess open trophy from Jose Advincula, senior manager of the tournament's sponsor, Belgosa Media Systems Inc. Standing at left is Danilo Queyquep of Chess Asia.

Goosen shoots 66, leads Woods by 1

POIPU BEACH, Hawaii — Masters champion Tiger Woods didn't shoot his best golf Tuesday, but still managed to play himself into contention for his fourth consecutive PGA Grand Slam of Golf title.

U.S. Open champion Retief Goosen shot a 6-under-par 66 to take a one-stroke lead over Woods in the 36-hole tournament that features the winners of all four major championships.

"I'm very happy to shoot what I shot today because I was not driving the golf ball the way I need to drive it," Woods said. "To end up 5-under par, I'm pretty happy with that."

PGA champion David Toms shot a 68, and British Open winner David Duval took himself out of contention early with a pair of double-bogeys on the front nine to finish at 76.

Woods made an initial run to defend his title again with birdies on the first two holes at the 7,053-yard (6418-meter) oceanside course. Goosen responded with birdies on three of the next four holes and then checking in with an eagle-3 on the 573-yard (521-meter) sixth by chipping in from 28 yards (25 meters).

Goosen reached the turn at 5-under-31 with Toms, who birdied the seventh through ninth. *AP*

WOODS

Jones prevails

AMERICA FedEx pilot Kelly Jones snapped compatriot Edward Lee Bumgarner's winning run in the Formula 125 class with a first place finish in the centerpiece category's finals in the second leg of MP Turbo's SPEEDFEST 2001. Jones overtook Bumgarner in the early laps of the final heat en route to earning his biggest win in the local kart race scene.

Tuason memorial race attracts stars

TOP motorsports figures, superstars and newcomers alike converge anew in the biggest gathering of racers to pay tribute to a Filipino racing legend in the 2nd Arthur Tuason Memorial Karting Cup Dec. 1-2 at the Carmona Circuit Philippines.

Organized by the Tuason Racing Project Karting Team headed by JP and Jeanette Tuason, the racefest's proceeds will be given to Leukemia-stricken beneficiaries of LIFE (Leukemic Indigent Fund Endowment).

Tuason, who died of leukemia, was a prominent racing figure since the '70s, both here and abroad.

He brought local motorsports to new heights when he copped the 1972 Rally Driver of the Year aboard his famous Ford RS2000 and has since been behind the wheel of almost all forms of racing, from karts to rally cars, from stock to formula cars.

In the business world, he reinvented car painting and restoration with Sikkens Wetlook Car Paint Finish, and from which he got the name "Mr. Wetlook."

RP softbelles triumph

PLANT CITY, Florida—Esmeralda Tayag went 3-for-3 and Cedda Valencia scattered seven hits as the Philippines clobbered Lady Cobras, 5-1, Tuesday and closed out the eliminations with a 4-1 record in the World Junior Girls Softball Championship here. Tayag, 17, a member of the Maynila Golden Girls that placed a decent third in the Big League World Series, posted two doubles and a triple in another remarkable performance watched by a huge Filipino crowd at the Plant City ballpark.

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ■ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

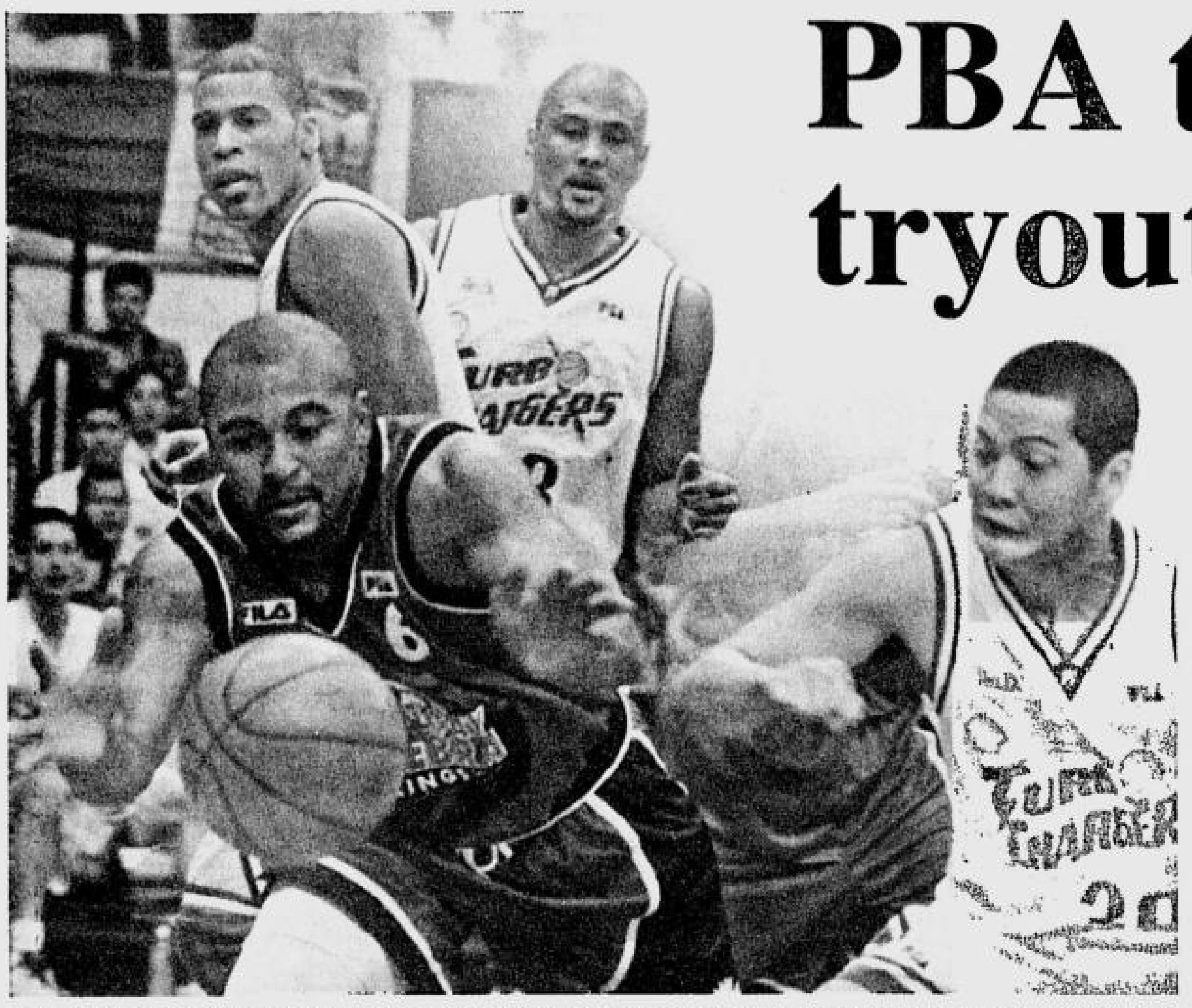
SPORTS ON TV Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: US NCAA - Preseason NIT, Semifinal #1 at 8 a.m. (r – 4 p.m.), Semifinal #2 at 10:30 a.m. (r – 6 p.m.), Great Alaska Shootout - Indiana vs Alaska-Anchorage, First Round at 12:30 p.m. (r – midnight) on ESPN

NBA – Dallas Mavericks vs Charlotte Hornets at 10 p.m. on NBN 4

GOLF: PGA - Grand Slam of Golf 2001 Day Two at 9 a.m. (r – 7:30 p.m.) on Star Sports

BMW Asian Open Golf 2001, Day One at 2 p.m. on Star Sports



GINEBRA import Bubba Wells (6) goes after the ball as Shell's (from right) Gerry Esplana, Chris Jackson and Askia Jones apply pressure. Shell won, 106-87, to grab the last semifinal ticket and arrange a best-of-five collision against defending champion San Miguel Beer on Friday. ERNIE SARMIENTO

PBA to conduct open tryouts for Asiad team

GAMES TOMORROW
(Ynares Center)
5:05p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Pop Cola
7:10p.m.—San Miguel vs Shell

By June Navarro

THE PBA yesterday laid the groundwork for the formation of the national team to next year's Asian Games in Pusan, South Korea.

PBA Commissioner Jun Bernardino said the league would conduct an open tryouts to aspirants raring to don the national colors starting on Jan. 3-Feb. 3.

But unlike in the last three Asiads where participation is strictly by invitation, Bernardino bared cagers from different leagues and institutions, professional or otherwise, could try their luck to become part of the prestigious PBA-backed team.

Once the tryout participants were pruned down to 24 aspirants, the cagers will be divided into two squads—blue and red—and are slated to compete against the 10 PBA teams for two conferences.

The blue and red teams will strut their wares starting with the Commissioner's Cup, which will be held in the first conference from Feb. 10-May 31.

After the PBA All-Star break sometime in June next year, the aspirants will be trimmed down and compete as one team in the second conference (Governors Cup).

The final composition of the national team will be known prior to the last phase of preparations or before Sept. 14. The national quintet will leave for Pusan on either Sept. 25 or 26.

Bernardino said he would present the plans of the Commissioner's Office for the Asiad stint to the PBA Board of Governors on its regular monthly meeting on Monday at the Manila Golf Club.

"The moment the PBA Board of Governors agreed to our proposal, we will immediately hold a press conference for the signing of the memorandum of agreement and announce the coaching staff," said Bernardino.

Meanwhile, Shell blasted Barangay Ginebra, 106-87, last night to snatch the last semifinal seat in the Governors Cup.

Scores:

SHELL 106—Wainwright 30, Jones 20, Hrabak 18, Esplana 12, Marzan 10, De la Cruz 7, Telan 6, Jackson 3, Cheng 0.

GINEBRA 87—Wells 21, Limpot 19, Helterbrand 16, David 10, Lago 10, Meneses 5, Magtulis 4, Calpito 2, Basco 0, Piodo 0, Caguioa 0.

Quarters: 24-20; 51-41; 74-54; 106-87.

Blu tries to stop Welcoat; Ana Freezers faces Kutitap

STANDINGS	W	L
Welcoat	3	0
ICTSI	3	0
Blu	3	1
Shark	2	2
Kutitap	2	3
Ana	2	3
Montaña	1	4
Ateneo	0	3

GAMES TODAY
(Makati Coliseum)
3:30 p.m.—Ana Freezers vs Kutitap Toothpaste
5:30 p.m.—Blu Detergent vs Welcoat Paints

TITLE-HUNGRY Blu Detergent takes a crack at Welcoat's unbeaten record, while Ana Freezers tests the mettle of Kutitap Toothpaste in the PBL Challenge Cup today at the Makati Coliseum.

The Paintmasters hurdled their last three opponents, but the Detergent Kings should prove to be tough customers when they clash at 5:30 p.m.

-Under rookie coach Tony de la Cerna, Blu has notched a second-running 3-1 card and a victory over the league's dominant team will be a tremendous bid as it searches for its first-ever title in three years.

To win, the Detergent Kings face not only the hard task of shackling slotman Yancy de Ocampo in the shaded lane, but must try to extend their defense in order to force gunners Ren Ren Ritualo and Jojo Manalo to work hard for their shots.

Edwin Bacani and Egay Billones banner Blu's assault with Marlon Legaspi, Francis Sanz and Arnold Calo battling De Ocampo and company in the shaded lane.

Ana tackles Kutitap Toothpaste in the first game at 3:30 p.m.

The Freezer Kings are having a roller-coaster ride this conference and will aim for their first back-to-back win against the Sparklers, losers of their last two games.

Ariel Capus, Robin Mendoza, Dondon Mendoza, Paul Artadi, Ariel de Castro and Leo Vilar will carry the load for Ana. *Dennis U. Eroa*

Cebu rips RP youngsters; Koreans wallop Warriors

GAMES TODAY
(Rizal Memorial Coliseum)
2 p.m.—Cebu Lhuillier vs Korea-Sangmu
4 p.m.—RP Young Men's vs Spring Cooking Oil
6 p.m.—UE vs San Sebastian College

By Roy Luarca

DEFENDING champion Cebu Lhuillier stormed to its third straight win even as Korea-Sangmu continued its recovery in the National Open Invitational Basketball Championship yesterday at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

The Jewelers, with five players drilling in double figures, dumped the FedEx RP Young Men's team, 91-77, while the Koreans trounced the University of the East Warriors, 109-64.

Cebu Lhuillier, which drew 24 points, including five triples from Wilfred Sampelo, posted its third straight win to keep the solo lead in the six-team tournament organized by the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

Other Jewelers who delivered were Mike Dumdum with 15, Daryl Smith 13, Rey Catona 13 and Jerry Jaca 12.

The RP youngsters being mentored by Johnny Tam suffered their third straight defeat and bowed out of the title race in the event supported by FedEx, Healthy Options and Baker's Fair.

It was the Koreans' turn to put up a shooting display in the second game. Led by Gil do Ik's 33 points, highlighted by seven triples, the Koreans poured everything they got in the second half to tally their second straight victory after a shocking opening day loss to Spring Cooking Oil.

The Koreans of the legendary Shin Dong Pa hit 18 of their trademark triples as they bared the form that made them runners-up in the tough 24th William Jones Cup in Taipei.

Spring Cooking Oil (1-1) and NCAA champion San Sebastian College (1-1) are still battling at presstime.

Ormoc hosts Nat'l Students

ORMOC City and the municipality of Isabel, Leyte will host the 56th National Students Basketball Championship slated February next year. Basketball Association of the Philippines secretary general Graham Lim said Ormoc City Mayor Carmelo Locsin and Isabel Mayor Roberto Fuentes Jr. welcomed the hosting stint after a meeting with BAP Region VIII director Dr. Lucrecio Calo.

Scores:

CEBU LHUILLIER 91—Sampelo 24, Dumdum 15, Smith 13, Cantona 13, Jaca 12, Enriquez 4, Reyes 4, Latonio 4, Libatog 2, Alvarado 2.

FEDEX RP YOUTH 77—Bombeo 17, Menor 11, Manching 11, Pingris 10, Tolentino 9, Reroma 4, Cordero 4, Aquino 3, Benitez 1.

Halftime: 49-46.

Andok's edges FedEx Laguna, 88-85

GAMES TOMORROW
RMC Gym, Davao City
3 p.m.—Cebuana Lhuillier vs TPG Davao
San Juan Gym
5:30 p.m.—FedEx Laguna vs Andok's San Juan

WHEN the game went down the wire, Andok's San Juan's championship experience spelled the difference.

Proving to be steadier under pressure, the reigning national titlist Knights bested FedEx Laguna, 88-85, and moved within a win of clinching a finals berth in the Northern Conference of the MBA Second Phase at the San Luis Sports Complex in Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

The Knights, also the First Phase champion, can abort the best-of-three semifinal series if they repeat over the Lakers in Game 2 tomorrow at the San Juan Gym.

Both teams uncharacteristically struggled throughout and lapsed into numerous errors, with the lead changing hands several times, before Chris Calaguio, Bruce Dacia and Danny Capobres scored crucial baskets that enabled the Knights to stay afloat.

It was Rafi Reavis, however, who proved to be the biggest thorn for the Lakers as the reedy 6-foot-8 center came through with 26 points, 8 rebounds, 1 steal and 2 blocks to earn best player honors.

A forward pitch by Reavis himself paved the way for Capobres' game-clinching lay-up with 30.2 seconds to go, snapping the Lakers' eight-game winning run that included two victories over the Knights in the elimination round.

The Lakers had two opportunities to force extension but Mike Manigo and Chris Clay, who had carried the scoring load for FedEx Laguna with 29 points, muffed their three-point attempts.

FedEx Laguna must exact revenge over Andok's San Juan tomorrow to force Game 3 and regain the homecourt edge.

The winner of the series will advance to the best-of-five conference finals against LBC Batangas, which drew a bye for topping the Northern Conference eliminations.

Cebuana Lhuillier routed TPG Davao, 117-93, in the second game at the Cebu City Coliseum to close in on the Southern Conference finals. The winner will face top qualifier Negros for the conference crown. *Roy Luarca*

Scores:

ANDOK'S SAN JUAN 88—Reavis 26, Calaguio 18, Capobres 15, Dacia 10, Rodriguez 7, Castillo 4, Victolero 3, Alcantara 3, Otto 2, Newton 0.

FEDEX LAGUNA 85—Clay 29, Manigo 12, Flowers 11, Simon 10, Barbosa 9, Mendiola 6, Melencio 4, Nicdao 4, Domingo 0, Regidor 0, Garcia 0.

Quarters: 22-25, 54-52, 65-63, 88-85.

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US fields 300 bets in Dubai

DUBAI, UAE—American trainer Bob Baffert has entered four horses for the 2002 Dubai World Cup meet in March, according to the first nominations announced Tuesday by the organizers.

The United States has the largest number of entries with 300 followed by the United Arab Emirates (187) and Britain (62).

Baffert, who has won the Dubai World Cup twice, has entered Wooden Phone, Tribunal, Thyer and Brainy. Baffert scored with Silver Champ in 1998 and Captain Steve in 2001 and continues a friendly rivalry with the Dubai-based Godolphin stable.

The Dubai World Cup, with a total purse of $15.25 million—including a main race first prize of $6 million—is the world's richest horse race.

Godolphin have entered Group One winners Sakhee and Noveree, in addition to former Kentucky Derby hopeful Street Cry and E Dubai.

Aiden O'Brien, who last week broke the world record for Group One winners in one international season with 23, has entered Bach for the 2,000-meter race at the Nad Al Sheba track, on March 23. *AP*

Batangas derby slated

THE UNITED Cockers Association of Batangas will start its 4-cock circuit derby season on Dec. 7. It will be held hence every first and last Friday of the month until June 28, 2002.

The provincial derby was designed by Mataas-na-Kahoy cockpit in Batangas to provide cockers and breeders a venue for roosters they do not want to sell but are good enough for big-time fights of the United Cockers Association of the Philippines.

Among the aficionados who have confirmed their memberships are Patrick Antonio, Vic Yu, Pol Estrellado, Pete Rodriguez, Justice Magdangal Elma, Judge Roberto Diokno, Mario Villamor and Virgilio Manguerra.

Jake Macasaet, co-owner of Mataas-na-Kahoy Cockpit with Leonardo Dimaculangan, said the Ucab which he founded two years ago, will follow the rules of the Ucap.

He said at least three more slots are open to cockers or breeders particularly those who have farms in Laguna, Batangas, Quezon or Cavite.

To accommodate small breeders, the pot money was fixed at P8,800 with a minimum bet of P5,500.

Macasaet will answer inquiries at tel. 527-18-40.

LGBA finals on tonight

THE THIRD LGBA 6-Stag Derby championship round fires off at 6 tonight before an anticipated banner crowd at the Mandaluyong Coliseum. Some 54 fights are lined up.

The current leaders who have two points going into tonight's finals are Mauro Prieto (Ucap March 19-21 II), Peping Cojuangco (CAT Stinger), Joel Fernando, Gerry Escalona and Madlambayan brothers (Clear Cut Jimafer Mapalad), Wilson Go and Dr. Gil Nicolas (632 Gamefarm), Francis Lumunsad (KGB-RGF), Romy Tan (Black Stallion II) and Emoy Gorgonia/Peter Uy (Jediking II).

With identical 11.5 points, lawyer Joey Mendoza (Tagapo Farm) and the tandem of Go and Nicolas (632 Gamefarm) currently lead in the LGBA Gamecock Breeder of the Year race.

Trailing them with 11 points apiece are Biboy Enriquez (Ucap March 19-21 I), engineer Jun Sevilla (JRS Spectrum) and Mike Buendia (Buenas Dias). Cojuangco (CAT Stinger) has 10.5 points while LGBA president Boy Diaz and Butch Littaua (Purple Haze) tallied 9 points.

For inquiries, please contact 531-4003, 531-4005, 535-2341 and 534-411.

RACING TIPS

AT SAN LAZARO By Mr. 999

Race 1—1. La Signorina 2. Heading West 3. Day and Night 4. Queen of Less

Race 2—1. Snowy Market 2. Playing With Fire 3. Courage 4. Pep Talk

Race 3—1. The Muse/Mr. Charity 2. Super Shuttle 3. Replica 4. Robyn Always 5. Golden Wave

Race 4—1. Rivine Master 2. Hong Kong Girl 3. Forever Royale 4. Cover Story

Race 5—1. Notable 2. Howard Huge 3. Rose in Bloom 4. Beautiful Task

Race 6—1. Lady Queen 2. Music City 3. Danielle's Angel 4. Glory Allelujia 5. Rainmaker

Race 7—1. Field Master 2. Aya's Dream 3. Gemstone 4. El Condor 5. Kay Rufina 6. Gifted Galloper

Race 8—1. American Beauty 2. Ananpour 3. Power Corrupts 4. Star Sapphire 5. Be Ready

Race 9—1. Walang Hanggan 2. Dancing Klara 3. Kathy Rose 4. Royal Angel 5. Hong Kong Treasure 6. El Magnifico

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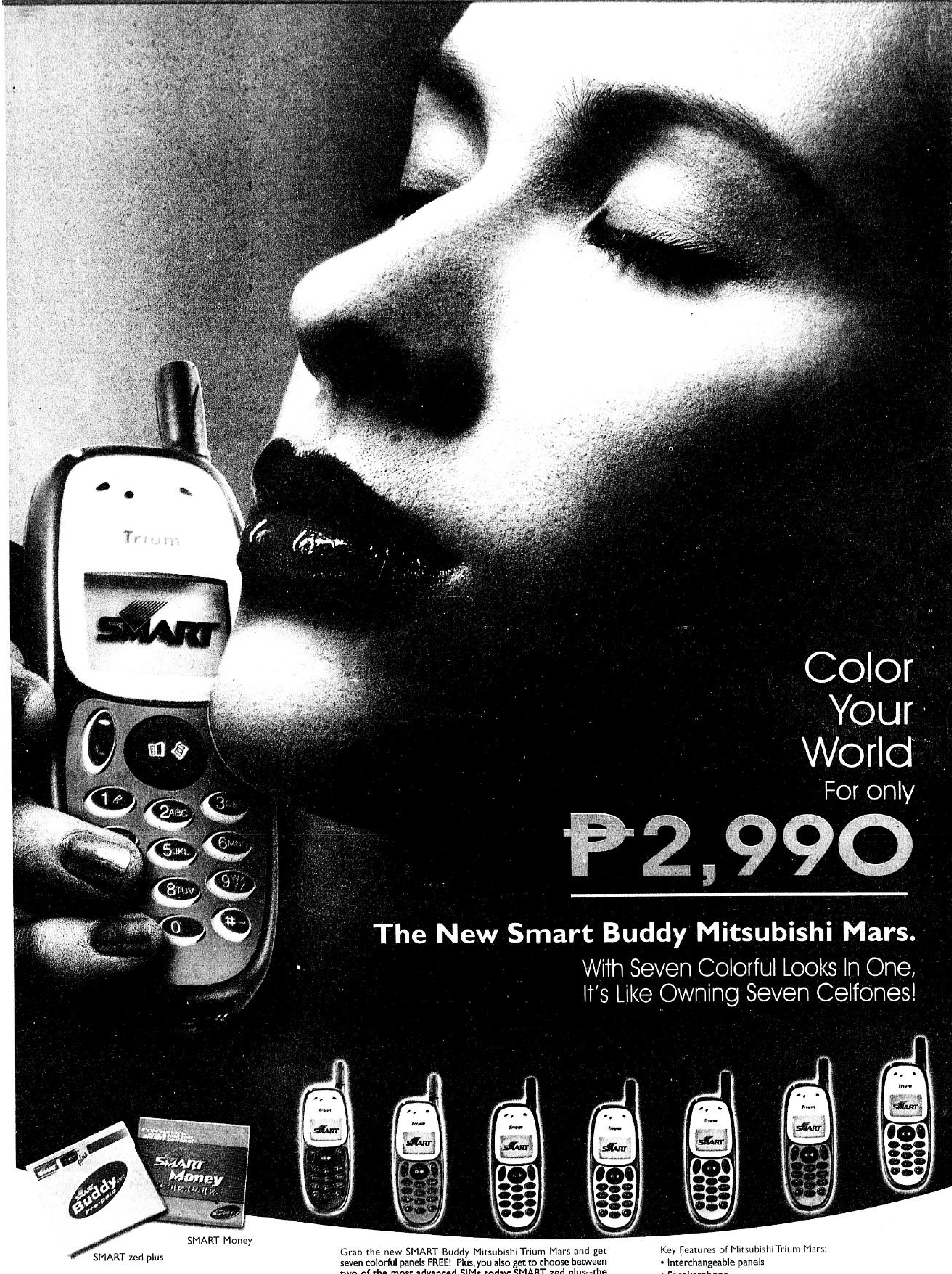

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METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Block commander kills amok

A MAN was shot dead after he went berserk in his Novaliches neighborhood. Ronaldo Niegas, 36, was shot dead on Tuesday night by Senior Insp. Rodolfo Aguilar, block commander of a police precinct in Novaliches, who responded to a report that Niegas was firing an improvised gun indiscriminately in Ibayo II, Novaliches and had injured his 6-year-old neighbor Oliver Estilles. *Agnes Donato*

Manila cop, 7 others in P5M heist nabbed A20

Vandolph had no driver's license

RAY ZAMBRANO

THIS looks every gory bit like the remnants a grenade launcher attack. This actually is what's left of the Ford 150 pick-up driven by Vandolph Quizon after it smashed into a parked truck in Pangasinan on Monday. The young comedian miraculously survived the accident.

QUIZON

BY AGNES E. DONATO

VANDOLPH Laxamana Quizon had no business driving the ill-fated vehicle that nearly crushed him and his girlfriend to death in a Pangasinan road smash-up on Monday.

Official findings yesterday bared that Vandolph who sustained serious injuries in the accident did not have a driver's license.

Land Transportation Office Chief Edgardo Abenina said Vandolph could be charged for driving without license on his way to Baguio with girlfriend Desiree Raquiza.

Abenina bared his findings after the LTO licensing office reviewed records and found that no driver's license, student or professional, had been issued to the 17-year-old son of comedy king Dolphy and actress Alma Moreno.

Earlier, there had been a claim by one of his half-brothers that Vandolph was in possession of a student permit, the reason he had a professional driver with him during the trip to Baguio.

Vandolph was driving Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez's Ford 150 pickup (Plate No. WGD 621) when he smashed into an eight-wheeler Elf truck in Pozzorobio town in Pangasinan, near the junction of Kennon Road and La Union.

Abenina added that driver Allan Araza, who was accompanying Vandolph when the accident happened, could also be held liable for allowing the minor to take the wheel.

The LTO chief, however, stressed that his agency cannot be held liable for the accident involving the young comedian.

The law provides that only drivers aged 18 or above can be issued a license and birth certificate is one of the requirements for its issuance.

The violation of the LTO licensing rule could also complicate insurance claim procedures.

Prayers working for Dolphy's son

BY LEAH SALTERIO

AFTER Vandolph Quizon figured in a near-fatal vehicular accident Monday afternoon, which left his car in total wreck, many said only a miracle could save the son of ace comedian Dolphy and actress Alma Moreno.

But prayers of those close to Vandolph and his family appeared to do wonders for the recovery of the 17-year-old actor-comedian.

Unconscious since the accident on Monday, Vandolph showed a big improvement by moving both his arms yesterday morning, according to his mother.

The actor underwent a seven-hour operation Tuesday night, but remained confined at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of Makati Medical Center (MMC), where he is under observation.

Moreno, who again tried to talk to her son yesterday, said she was very pleased after Vandolph vaguely tried to respond.

"He tried to open his eyes while I talked to him" said Alma, who never left MMC since Monday night, when Vandolph was airlifted from a Pangasinan hospital after the vehicular accident.

Yesterday morning, Born-Again Christian actress Coney Reyes of the religious program "700 Club," also prayed for Vandolph inside the ICU.

Lynn Ynchausti-Cruz, wife of actor

PRAYERS/A20

Thieves beat BIR employees to bonuses

MANY Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) employees will not get their Christmas bonus this year after thieves took P5 million from the BIR office at the Port Area, Manila.

Worse, investigators said that the culprits might also be BIR employees.

Unidentified suspects took the money from the BIR Region VI office's cashiering unit at the sixth floor of the BIR building on Anda Circle, Manila after office hours, said investigator PO3 Gordius Alundro, of the Western Police District-homicide section.

Investigators suspect that the theft might be an inside job because the door of the cashiering unit office and the file cabinet where the money was kept were not forcibly opened, Alundro said.

"The suspects must have had the key to both the door and the filing cabinet," he added.

Alundro identified the four BIR employees who have keys to the office as Yolanda S. Berania, 50; Sarah A. Dolina, 35; Maria Concepcion Malinaw, 29, and Alma Quintos, 42.

He said the theft happened between 5:10 p.m. Tuesday and 6:30 a.m. yesterday while the BIR employees were home.

Berania, a computer operator, discovered the theft after she reported for work yesterday, Alundro said.

BIR employees said the cashiering unit had a vault but the money was stored in a filing cabinet because the vault was "defective," Alundro added.

He said the fund for the bonuses was P6.5 million but around P1.5 had been released to the employees earlier this week.

"The money was already in envelopes and was ready for distribution. I think there was more than one culprit because they took out the money from each envelope," Alundro said.

But he also noted that some 900 envelopes left at the filing cabinet still had money. The suspects also did not take some cash intended for the employees' salaries. *Philip Tubeza*

'Eat Bulaga' execs face copyright violation raps

THE OFFICE of the City Prosecutor of Quezon City has filed criminal charges against the officers of Television and Production Exponents Inc. (TAPE), producer of the long-running GMA 7 noontime show 'Eat Bulaga,' for violation of the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines.

Named as defendants were TAPE board directors Antonio P. Tuviera, Romeo P. Jalosjos, Teodoro S. Toribio, Juanico B. Enrico and Cenon V. Lucas, along with 'Eat Bulaga' executive producer Malou Choa-Fagar and head writer Jennifer Ferre.

Tuviera, Choa-Fagar and Ferre are out on bail, while the rest (with the exception of Jalosjos, who is serving time at the National Penitentiary) are still the subjects of an arrest warrant issued by Branch 90 presiding judge Reynaldo Daway of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court.

Their arraignment has been scheduled for December 7.

The charges stemmed from a complaint filed by INQUIRER trivia-quiz columnist and TV producer-writer Bong Barrameda against the accused for their "extensive unauthorized use" of his copyrighted works as daily material in the *Meron o Wala* quiz segment of 'Eat Bulaga' from June 1999 until it was renamed *Laban o Bawi* in October 2000.

In her resolution, investigating prosecutor Rosanna Fe Romero- Maglaya wrote: "This Office finds probable cause to indict the respondents for violation of Republic Act 8293, otherwise known as the Intellectual Property Code.... Records show, and as admitted, complainant is the author and exclusive copyright owner of the *Pinoy Trivia* book series Volumes 1-4), *Thinkathon Pocket Quiz Game* (Editions 1-4), and the *Trivia* and *Thinkathon* columns in the Philippine Daily Inquirer. Being the copyright owner of the aforesaid works, complainant has the exclusive right to carry out, authorize or prevent, among others, the public performance or other communication to the public of the works.

LABAN KA TALAGA?
PINOY TRIVIA

"However, on several occasions starting June 1999, the evidence shows that 'Eat Bulaga,' a noontime variety show produced and headed by respondents, featured a quiz segment (titled) *Meron o Wala*, which publicly used, recited and communicated the articles, questions and answers and other data contained in the aforementioned copyrighted works, either lifted verbatim therefrom or translated literally into Tagalog, but without the permission and authority of the copyright owner. Said unauthorized use and public transmission of the works are proved by the transcripts of the video-tapes of the particular episodes of the said noontime show."

Barrameda, a one-time TV quiz champion who is currently program consultant of the award-winning TV programs 'Digital LG Quiz' and 'Knowledge Power,' said he had to file the complaint to protect his works and name.

WAZZZZUP ? ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

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Manila cop, 7 others in ₱5-M heist nabbed

By Philip C. Tubeza

A MANILA policeman and seven other men behind a syndicate that hijacked P5.5 million worth of rubber tires and Perry Ellis T-shirts haVE been arrested, the National Bureau of Investigation announced yesterday.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said PO3 Romeo R. Noriega, 37, of 310 Romana St., Velasquez, Tondo, Manila, and assigned at the Western Police District-district police intelligence unit, was the suspected mastermind of the syndicate.

Noriega's accomplices include businessmen Joel M. Marcelo, 40; and Jay Byron S. Ilagan, 29; fisherman Rey D. Manalaysay, 36; vendor Frederick D. Manalaysay, 31; Alfredo S. Catubis, 31, Luis V. Flores, 31; and Joaquin V. Malabanan, 39.

NBI Deputy Director Samuel Ong said his men confiscated from the suspects' warehouse in Caloocan 292 Double Happiness rubber tires worth P700,000 and P4 million worth of Perry Ellis shirts.

Ong said that the suspects must have disposed the other rubber tires, worth P800,000.

"We still don't know who are the owners of the Perry Ellis shirts. I hope that when he hears of this arrest, he will come to the NBI," Ong added.

He said that the NBI began investigating the syndicate after the suspects hijacked a 40-ft. container van (with plate number TEN 609) between 1 to 3 a.m. on Friday last week.

The van contained 730 sets of rubber tires, worth P1.5 million. Two men flagged down the van near the Macro Supermarket in Navotas.

Ong said the van's driver, Roger Lapana, also a suspect because he stopped when the two men appeared, is still at large.

The two robbers boarded the van and held the van helper, Primitivo Baidal, at knifepoint, before they blindfolded and tied him up. Baidal was later left along Road 10, also in Navotas.

The van's owner, Romulado Celestra, learned of the robbery and he immediately contacted the NBI.

Ong said his men, under lawyer Rustico Vigilia, traced the suspects' lair at a compound in 45 Dagat-dagatan, Caloocan City.

When NBI agents went to the compound on Friday afternoon, they saw a truck leaving loaded with rubber tires.

Ong said his men asked the driver for documents of the tires but the driver could not provide one.

Ong added that his men then got the written consent of the owner to check the compound. They found the suspects inside the warehouse with the stolen Double Happiness tires, "neatly stacked inside the compound."

Noriega was allegedly the warehouse lessee; Marcelo, the caretaker, and the others as helpers.

Ong's men again asked if the suspects had papers to prove their ownership of the tires and the shirts but they could not present a single document. They also could not explain their presence in the warehouse.

The NBI charged the suspects for highway robbery before the Caloocan City Prosecutors Office while Lepasana is the subject of a manhunt.

TAGUIG DEMOLITION

Soldiers might clash with fellow soldiers

By Christian V. Esguerra

VIOLENCE escalated between the military-backed demolition team and defiant residents on the second day of demolition in Taguig yesterday.

Expecting another bloody encounter with residents, the Philippine Army deployed more troops in full battle gear as early as 9 a.m. "to sow terror among the squatters," said village leader Renato Gabriel, 32.

Soldiers were apparently wary that fellow military men, whose houses would also be demolished, might retaliate with gunfire, said Divina Daguno of the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines.

The 1,000-strong demolition team "scattered like ants" and razed houses and other structures way beyond the 15-meter limit prescribed by the Department of Public Works and Highways, said Marivic Caguioa, 23, whose two-week-old baby nearly died during Tuesday's demolition.

The DPWH, together with Taguig local government, ordered the demolition of structures along C-5 Road to pave the way for a road-widening project.

"They destroyed everything...they don't have heart," Caguioa told the INQUIRER.

Caguioa's newborn son Jomari reportedly turned "violet due to suffocation" after members of the demolition team threw teargas to keep residents from retaliating last Tuesday.

"We were begging them not to throw teargases because there were babies, but they didn't listen," said Merlie Sanchez, 40.

A television footage on Tuesday caught a soldier hitting a man in the face with a gun while arresting him for allegedly throwing a pillbox. The man, Joel Tagnipes, 19, suffered a nasty cut on the nose and bruises all over his body.

"They (soldiers) warned me not to file any complaint or they would arrest me again," Tagnipes told the INQUIRER.

Amid the commotion, members of the demolition team allegedly looted houses and stores.

Estrella Boragay, 52, had her construction supply store demolished. Authorities confiscated construction materials worth around P300,000 and refused to return them, she said.

Others lost cash, appliances, and other valuables to the demolition team, said Vangie de Jesus, 38.

Residents condemned the DPWH and the Taguig local government for the supposed illegal demolition. They said authorities violated the Urban Development and Housing Act when they demolished structures 15-meters from the shoulder of C-5 Road.

They added they were given only three days to vacate the place.

City Hall rushing oil depot phaseout

By Jerome Aning

THE MANILA city government yesterday said it would immediately implement the rezoning ordinance of Pandacan, which would effectively phase out the operation of oil depots in the area.

The council passed into law the ordinance on Tuesday.

"The law is on our side and we will implement it," said Manila Mayor Lito Atienza in reaction to the City Council's approval of the ordinance that reclassified the 32-hectare depot site from industrial to commercial.

Atienza said Pandacan has the potential as a commercial and residential site but its development has been hampered by the continued operation of the depot "because nobody would want to invest money to develop an area beside a ticking time bomb."

But the United Fire Fighters of the Philippines has warned the Department of Energy and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources from transferring the depot to another populated area and expressed alarm about the proposal of Malabon-Navotas Representative Federico Sandoval to move the oil facility to Navotas.

"The congressman's proposal is the same as jumping out of the frying pan straight into the fire," said UFFP spokesperson Alvin Estrada. He said that a depot on a reclaimed area off Navotas is a potential "ecological nightmare."

"Even without any significant disaster, the mere operation of oil depots in the area would kill off the fishing grounds due to the natural by-products and waste materials," Estrada added.

Estrada said the UFFP also opposes other proposals by the DENR to relocate the depot on a reclaimed island near the mouth of the Pasig River or on another island off Pampanga.

Prayers . . .

(From page A19)

Tirso Cruz III, told the Inquirer she also prays for Vandolph constantly, since she heard about his accident on the radio.

Rumors that Vandolph had died circulated yesterday afternoon. But a source inside the actor's hospital suite readily refuted the information.

Vandolph's condition is, in fact, improving, even as he remained confined at the ICU.

Last Tuesday, Vandolph was operated on the hips, right arm and right leg, which all sustained multiple fractures. A second operation will be performed on the young actor by a team of surgeons and specialists within the week.

It was Moreno who gathered the team of surgeons and specialists last Monday night, while waiting for Vandolph to be airlifted from the Sacred Heart Hospital in Urdaneta, Pangasinan to the MMC.

Vandolph, however, did not lose an arm or a leg, contrary to earlier reports.

Vandolph's attending physicians are Dr. Pia Banico and Dr. Gerry Panlilio.

Vandolph was driving a Ford-150 pickup owned by his stepfather, Para¤aque Mayor Joey Marquez, when he met the accident.

RAY ZAMBRANO

THE rear tire of vehicle Vandolph Quizon had smashed against a truck was both busted and detached by the violent impact.

Two foreign groups slug it out over incineration

By Alcuin Papa and Christian Esguerra

THE FOREIGN consortium pushing for a new waste disposal technology has threatened to file charges against Greenpeace Philippines for "libelous and unfounded" allegations that the consortium had been violating environmental laws abroad.

But officials of the environmental group were unfazed and said yesterday that they would welcome any case against Greenpeace while they vowed to continue their campaign against any garbage disposal system involving incineration.

Officials of Interstate Wdste Management Inc., the US-based consortium, yesterday cried foul over Greenpeace's accusations that the company has been misleading the public when it introduced "thermoselect" technology.

Interstate Waste has since denied Greenpeace's claim that thermoselect is a "polluting incineration technology."

"Greenpeace is a big liar," said Roger Van den Berghe, Philippine consultant of Interstate. "(The allegations) are twisted and a product of imagination. I don't know what Greenpeace is up to."

But Von Hernandez, campaign manager for Greenpeace Southeast Asia, dismissed the threat and said that it "won't hide the fact or erase (Interstate's) track record regarding their supposedly 'perfect' waste disposal system."

"(Interstate) can't hide the fact that thermoselect is a form of incineration and that some of their plants in Europe have been closed," Hernandez said in a phone interview yesterday.

Hernandez revealed that Interstate also filed a similar case against Greenpeace Mediterranean.

"This is not the first time they have harassed us," Hernandez said.

He added that the libel threat is the usual ploy of big corporations "to harass groups who are against their interests."

In Italy, a thermoselect factory was supposedly shut down for storing hazardous wastes in 1990. It allegedly exploded and injured two people the following year, according to Greenpeace.

Gunter Kiss, Interstate's manager, was sentenced to 11 months imprisonment for allegedly violating environmental laws in Italy. Two other company officials drew jail terms of three months and six months for similar offenses, Greenpeace said.

But Van den Berghe explained that thermoselect is not an incinerator, a disposal system prohibited under the Clean Air Act of 1999.

Unlike an incinerator, the system is said to heat up—but not burn—wastes to convert them into drinking water and electricity, among others.

"Greenpeace should do its homework first before making any accusation," Van den Berghe said. "It's a pity that it doesn't know what it's talking about."

The consultant denied that Interstate stored toxic materials in its plant in Italy, as Greenpeace claimed.

He said the plant was eventually allowed to operate after an investigation by Italian authorities.

Favorable response to geographic guidelines

SEVENTEEN provinces, 50 municipalities and four cities, including the capital city of Manila, want their municipal and city waters delineated in a growing favorable reaction to the issuance of Administrative Order 17 by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources providing the technical guidelines in the measurement of water boundaries.

Commodore Renato Feir of the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority said that the immediate response by the first batch of 71 local government units show acceptability of the guidelines to define the geographic extent of the city or municipality's taxation or revenue-generating powers.

The 1,496-strong League of Municipalities of the Philippines and more than 100 non-governmental organizations and fisherfolk organizations have earlier passed complimentary resolutions supporting the issuance of "DAO 17" for its immediate implementation.

GMA to bring home bacon

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

ONLY her political opponents and the leftists would say that President Macapagal-Arroyo's visit to the United States is not fruitful in terms of getting financial and military aid for the country.

The Bush administration has promised increased financial support for the Philippines and military aid to fight home-grown terrorists. These terrorists receive support from Bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

Let's face it: the country needs US aid now more than ever. Let's set aside our false pride and be practical.

***

The government agency that needs the most propping-up is the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

We have a navy that's practically without ships and an air force practically without planes. All the ships and planes they're using are of World War II or Vietnam War vintage.

We need ships and planes to transport army troops to troubled areas immediately. If only our air force had planes that could fly long distance, the Moro kidnappers who raided Dos Palmas resort in Palawan would have been caught at sea.

If we had fast moving patrol craft, local pirates would not rule our sealanes.

***

Where in the world can you find soldiers in full battle gear riding in public utility vehicles in going to battle? Perhaps only in the Philippines.

The Special Forces soldiers who were ambushed by New People's Army guerillas in Davao Oriental were riding on a private dump truck. Eighteen of the commandos were killed.

In other countries, elite soldiers are transported by helicopters or other fast-moving craft.

***

In terms of fighting capability, our soldiers can hold their own with other soldiers of the world. Our military is not only battle-tested (remember, the government is fighting two enemies, the Moro separatists and communist guerillas), it also receives training from the US armed forces.

Our soldiers make do with the meager resources they have. And yet, most of the time they prevail against the enemy.

Give our soldiers the latest military hardware and equipment and they will be among the world's best fighting machines.

***

The military made up for its sluggish performance in fighting the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan by licking the group of Nur Misuari's Moro National Liberation Front.

Government troops repulsed the attacks by the MNLF on several Army camps in Sulu. Many Moro rebels were killed in the attacks.

The military has redeemed itself in the latest Moro insurrection in Sulu.

***

The father-son tandem of former President Estrada and Jinggoy will be spending their first Christmas in jail. The Supreme Court has ruled in 10-4-1 decision that the anti-plunder law, violation of which the Estradas are accused of, is constitutional.

Although they will be away from the rest of their family, the Estradas enjoy some comforts like a private suite with an ante-room to receive visitors.

Their fellow accused, lawyer Edward Serapio, does not enjoy the same privileges.

Why can't the government be fair to Serapio by having him join the Estradas at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center?

***

Two Visayan senators, Aquilino Pimentel and Sergio Osmena III, berated Cebu City Rep. Antonio Cuenco for trying to subpoena the bank accounts of two brothers he accuses of drug trafficking.

Cuenco, chair of the committee investigating the alleged illegal drugs activities of businessmen Peter and Wellington Lim, tried to compel the two brothers to show him their bank accounts.

Pimentel and Osmena can't pry into the bank accounts of private individuals and even government officials. Only the Anti-Money Laundering Board can do that but with the permission of the courts.

For a lawyer, Cuenco doesn't know his law.

***

My sources in Cebu City, who are not taking sides, tell me the Cebu City congressman is using his lofty position to oppress the two brothers. They call Cuenco's antics "legislative oppression."

Granting the Lims are drug lords, why not file criminal cases against them instead of harassing them through a useless legislative inquiry, my sources said.

Some of these sources say the Lims probably did not support the congressman in the last elections.

***

Cuenco, the sources say, also has political supporters among individuals who are included in the list of the city's drug traffickers. Among them is Jaming Zabate, whom the congressman allegedly cleared of drug trafficking after he became his political supporter.

Tsk ! tsk ! tsk ! Cuenco probably subscribes to a distorted defense of a controversial ally in these infamous words: "He may be a son of a b***h, but he's our son of a b***h."

Perhaps to Cuenco his friends can't go wrong.

***

Eliseo Alampay, a member of the board of administrators of the National Electrification Administration, probably doesn't know what the word d*elicadeza* means.

Alampay's law office is defending the NEA against a civil suit filed by a company that allegedly won a bidding but was not rewarded a contract by the government-owned corporation.

Alampay should leave it to the Office of Government Corporate Counsel to do the job of defending NEA.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, November 22, 2001
33rd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **1 Mac 2:15-29**
Gospel: **Lk 19:41-44**

When Jesus had come in sight of the city, he wept over it and said, "If only today you knew the ways of peace! But now your eyes are held from seeing. Yet days will come upon you when your enemies will surround you with barricades and shut you in and press on you from every side. And they will dash you to the ground and your children with you, and leave not a stone within you, for you did not recognize the time and the visitation of your God."

Commentary

In Jerusalem, the religious leaders reject Jesus, the Giver of peace. They are blinded. They cannot see what makes for peace. Faith makes us see. In believing, we find peace that others do not. The name "Jerusalem" comes from a root word meaning peace. It is meant to be a city of peace. Yet, by the sin of its religious leaders, it has become a city of doom. When religious leaders fail, we see what disaster their sin brings to the whole community. Even the innocent children and the stones will go with them to the ground. Jesus weeps for the city at its impending judgment for its leaders pursued their iniquity to the end. May we have leaders who know how to listen.

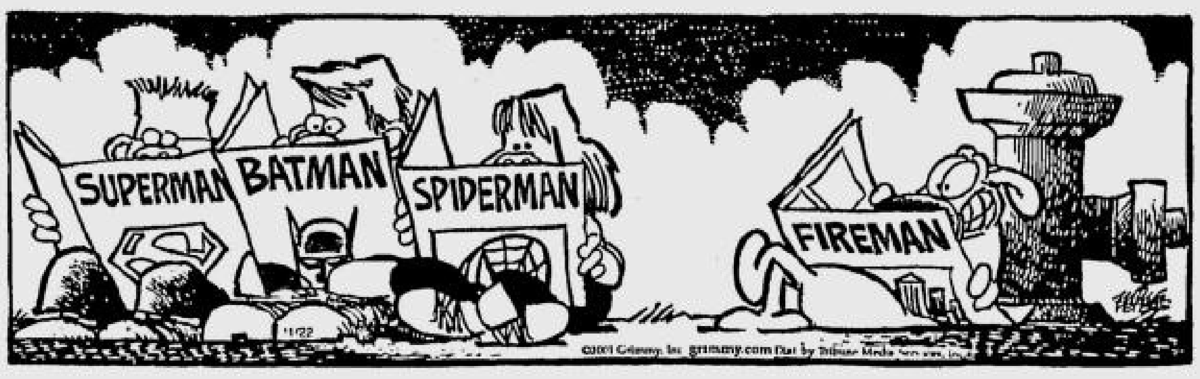
Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cnl.net; Websites:http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications Inc.) & http://missionaries.claret.org (Claretians in the Philippines)

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—Action for malicious prosecution—An action for malicious prosecution is defined as an action for damages brought by one against whom a criminal prosecution, civil suit or other legal proceeding has been instituted maliciously and without probable cause, after the termination of such prosecution, suit, or other proceeding in favor of the defendant therein. The gist of the action is the putting of legal process in force, regularly, for the mere purpose of vexation or injury. The statutory bases for a civil action for damages for malicious prosecution are found in the provisions of the New Civil Code on Human Relations and on damages particularly Articles 19, 20, 21, 26, 29, 32, 35, 2217 and 2219 (8). A complaint for malicious prosecution states a cause of action if it alleges: 1) that the defendant was himself the prosecutor or that at least he instigated the prosecution; 2) that the prosecution finally terminated in the plaintiff's acquittal; 3) that in bringing the action the prosecutor acted without probable cause; and, 4) that the prosecutor was actuated by malice, i.e., by improper and sinister motives. [Citations omitted.] [Justice De Leon, Jr., Second Division, Drilon v. Court of Appeals, G.R. No. 106922, April 20, 2001]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM BY MIKE PETERS


SUPERMAN
BATMAN
SPIDERMAN
FIREMAN
11/22
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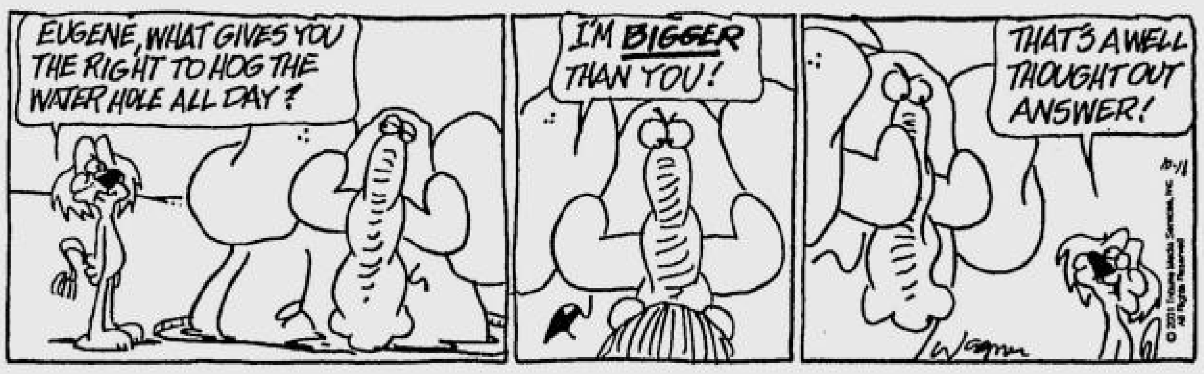
ANIMAL CRACKER BY FRED WAGNER


EUGENE, WHAT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO HOG THE WATER HOLE ALL DAY?
I'M BIGGER THAN YOU!
THAT'S A WELL THOUGHT OUT ANSWER!
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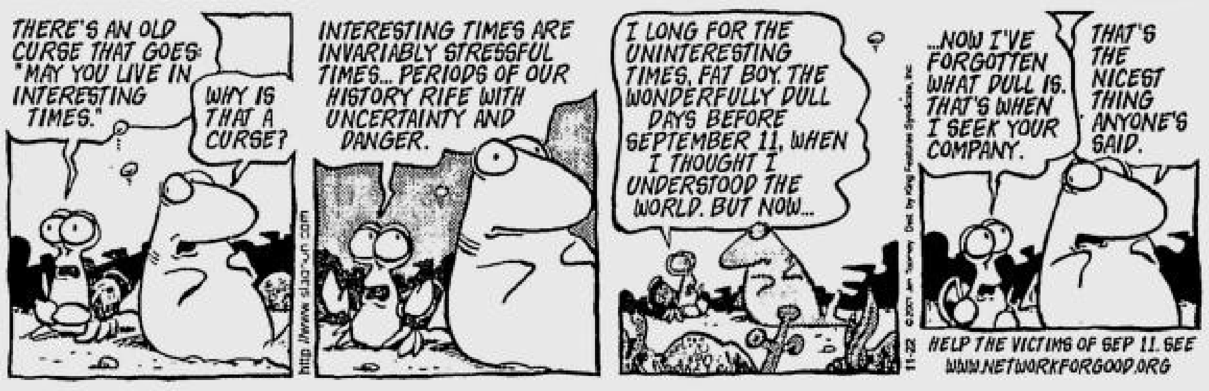
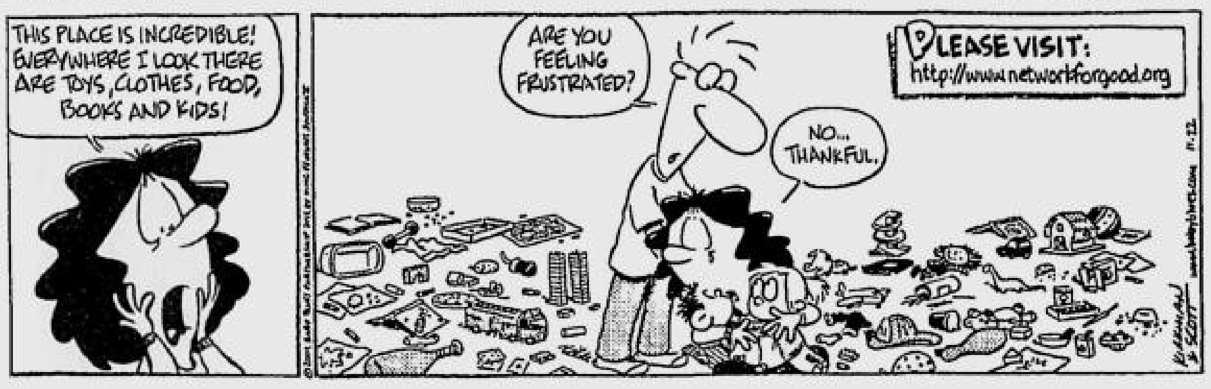
SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY


THERE'S AN OLD CURSE THAT GOES: "MAY YOU LIVE IN INTERESTING TIMES."
WHY IS THAT A CURSE?
INTERESTING TIMES ARE INVARIABLY STRESSFUL TIMES... PERIODS OF OUR HISTORY RIFE WITH UNCERTAINTY AND DANGER.
I LONG FOR THE UNINTERESTING TIMES, FAT BOY. THE WONDERFULLY DULL DAYS BEFORE SEPTEMBER 11, WHEN I THOUGHT I UNDERSTOOD THE WORLD. BUT NOW...
...NOW I'VE FORGOTTEN WHAT DULL IS. THAT'S WHEN I SEEK YOUR COMPANY.
THAT'S THE NICEST THING ANYONE'S SAID.
HELP THE VICTIMS OF SEP 11. SEE WWW.NETWORKFORGOOD.ORG

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


THIS PLACE IS INCREDIBLE! EVERYWHERE I LOOK THERE ARE TOYS, CLOTHES, FOOD, BOOKS AND KIDS!
ARE YOU FEELING FRUSTRATED?
NO... THANKFUL.
PLEASE VISIT: http://www.networkforgood.org

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jamie Lee Curtis, Rodney Dangerfield, Mariel Hemingway, Billie Jean King, Boris Becker

Happy Birthday: Your ability to drum up help and forge ahead toward your goal will be rewarding. You'll elicit the kind of interest you've been looking for, but beware of others' ulterior motives. Stay on top of your game to outsmart connivers. Your numbers: 9, 16, 24, 29, 36, 44

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Take part in your community, especially a project that you believe in, and romantic opportunities may develop. You can dazzle potential partners with your quick wit and charm.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Consider your options and don't be afraid to take on a new look. You will come across as more confident if you feel good about yourself. Business trips will be advantageous.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Your ability to handle others will bring the recognition and support that are necessary to further your interests. It will be easier to learn and excel if you mingle with influential people.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You need to be strong-minded and stern if you really want to get your point across. A youngster may be hard to deal with. Try to understand his point of view. Financial limitations will surface if you take risks.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Changes are always difficult initially. If you focus on what's important, you will do just fine. Career moves will be prosperous and add pizzazz to your life.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You need to have patience. After all, not everyone is up to speed on what you're trying to accomplish. You may be ahead of your time. Romance could unfold through a business contact.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): It's time to redo, re-evaluate and reschedule. Focus on self-improvement projects, such as quitting any bad habits you've picked up and ridding yourself of dead weight.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't allow anyone to put unreasonable demands on you. You can't do everything on your own. Take care of your own interests first and then deal with other people's dilemmas.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): It's time to take a back seat and let somebody else take the heat. You need a break. As long as you listen to what's going on, you should be able to handle the outcome.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): The less you spend and the more you give of yourself, the better. Stay calm and the people you are with will mellow. Try to refrain from being judgmental.

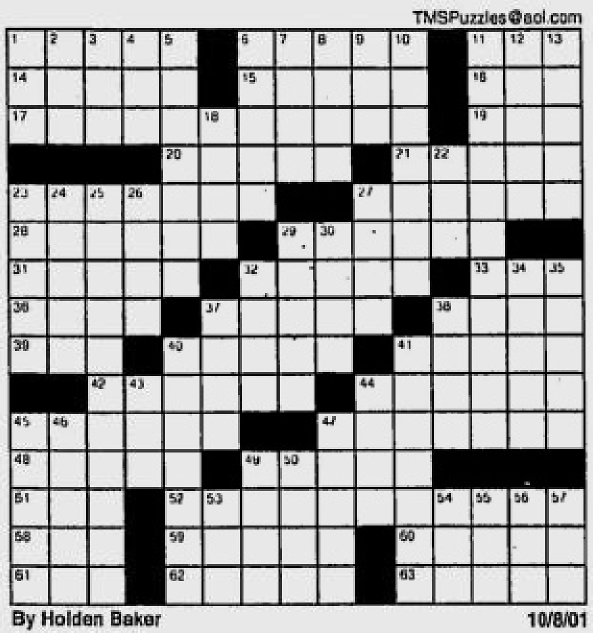
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Your emotional sensitivity will attract potential partners. Choose friends wisely and make sure the benefits are reciprocal. You need some intellectual stimulation.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): It's time to chill out. You can do absolutely nothing about your worries. Get back to basics. It's time to come to terms with your current situation and move on.

Birthday Baby: You are changeable, loving and quick to try something new. You have a strong sense of justice and fair play. Your forthright manner will pay off throughout your life.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Holden Baker
Greenfield, MA

10/8/01

ACROSS
1 Stylishly out-of-date
6 Casino cash-dispensers?
11 Gardner of "Mogambo"
14 Clapton's group
15 Chump
16 Adjective for the Beatles
17 Foes
19 Travel by plane
20 "Star Wars" director
21 Anklebone
23 Bull's-eyes
27 Shows to be false
28 Intermediaries
29 Kind of bomb
31 Phony
32 Military bigwigs
33 Bit
36 Burden
37 Common nut tree
38 Mah-jongg piece
39 Popeye's Olive
40 Spinet, e.g.
41 One who tears: suff.
42 Dawn goddess
44 Put on weight
45 Human trunks
47 Supporting pieces
48 Hindu tunes
49 Dot.com letters
51 Tempe sch.
52 Toes
58 Actress Susan
59 Slur over
60 Gymnast Comaneci
61 Superman's letter
62 Ceremonies
63 Secreting organ

DOWN
1 GE acquisition in 1986
2 Drop the ball
3 Gumshoe
4 College cheer
5 Brunch offerings
6 Eyeglasses: slang
7 Tibetan priest
8 Cornelia __ Skinner
9 Half a fly?
10 Methods
11 Woes
12 Worth
13 Bottomless pit
18 Cashews and pecans
22 Boxing great
23 No-no
24 "...the __ of defeat"
25 Joes
26 Wildebeests
27 Twaddle
29 Game or battle site
30 Mexican sandwich
32 Yogi or Smokey
34 "A Delicate Balance" playwright
35 Exploits
37 Flicks about people
38 The closer one
40 Thrive
41 Chemist Linus
43 "Born in the __"
44 Crisscross framework
45 Barter
46 Desert springs
47 Yarns
49 Revise for print
50 Produced
53 Wallach or Whitney
54 Guy's sweetie
55 Lupino or Tarbell
56 Malleable metal
57 Unhappy

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

G	O	R	I	L	L	A	■	S	T	E	W	A	R	D
A	V	E	N	U	E	S	■	T	R	A	I	L	E	R
B	E	L	O	N	G	S	■	A	I	R	M	I	L	E
B	R	I	N	G	S	U	P	T	O	S	P	E	E	D
I	D	A	■	■	■	R	E	O	■	■	■	N	A	G
N	U	N	S	■	T	E	T	R	A	■	J	O	S	E
G	E	T	W	O	R	D	■	S	E	C	U	R	E	D
■	■	■	E	A	U	■	■	■	S	A	L	■	■	■
S	T	R	A	F	E	D	■	M	I	N	E	R	A	L
P	A	A	R	■	S	A	B	E	R	■	P	E	S	O
A	N	N	■	■	■	M	I	X	■	■	■	T	I	C
R	A	I	S	E	S	A	B	I	G	S	T	I	N	K
I	G	N	O	R	E	S	■	C	A	L	O	R	I	E
N	E	T	W	O	R	K	■	A	L	I	M	E	N	T
G	R	O	S	S	E	S	■	N	E	M	E	S	E	S

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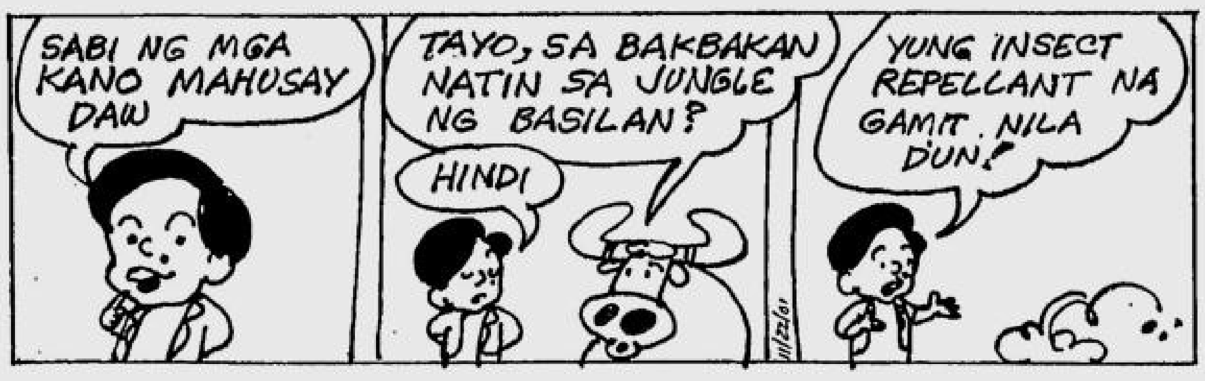
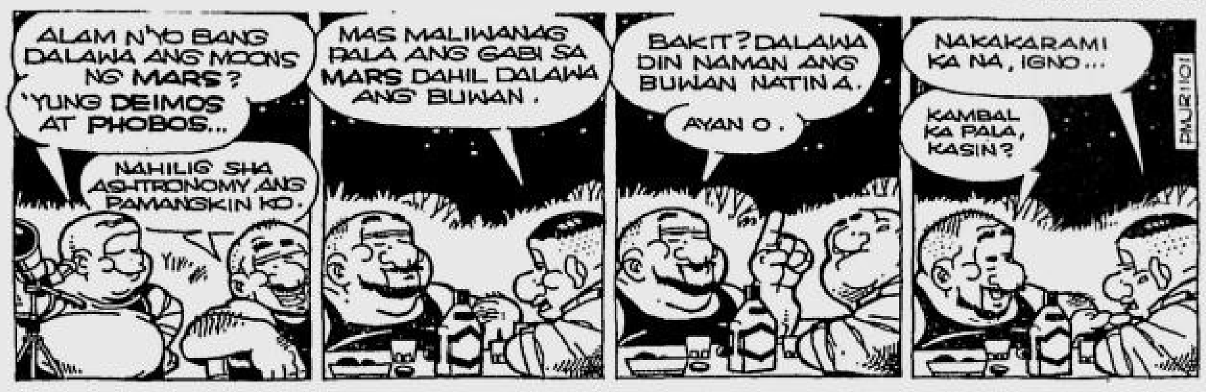
10/8/01

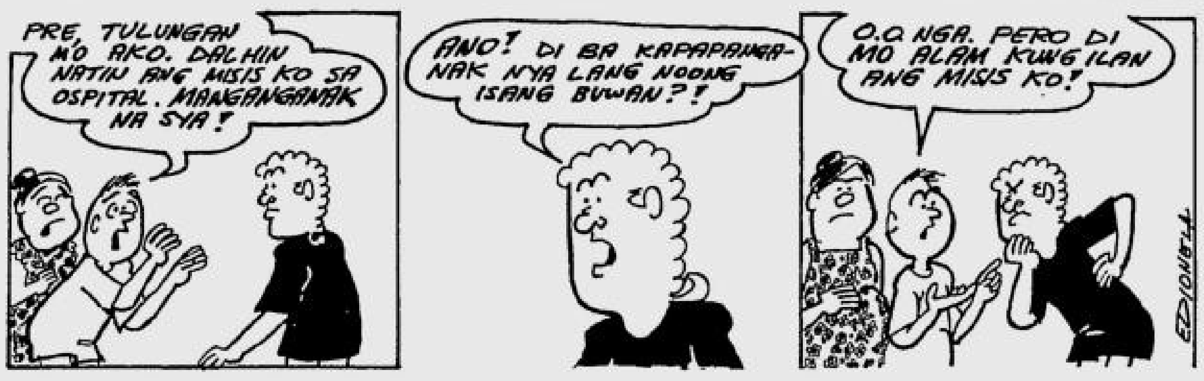
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


SABI NG MGA KANO MAHUSAY DAW
TAYO, SA BAKBAKAN NATIN SA JUNGLE NG BASILAN?
HINDI
YUNG INSECT REPELLANT NA GAMIT NILA DUN!
11/21/01

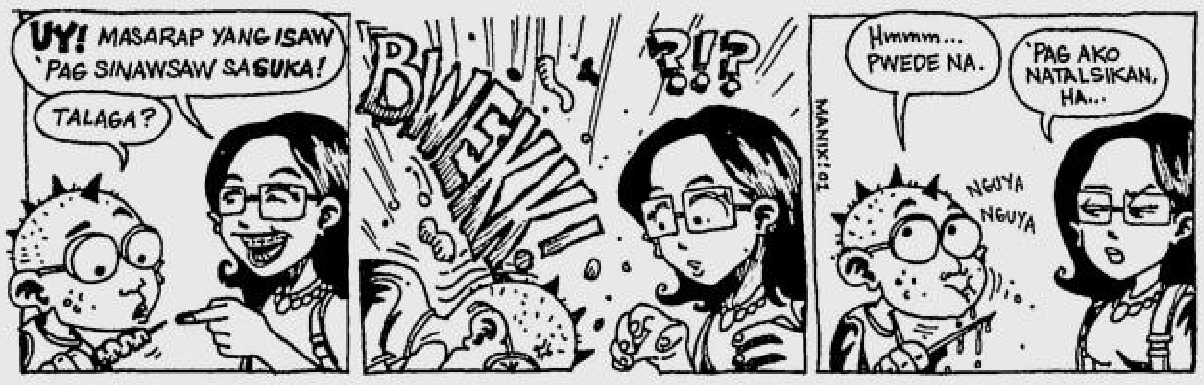
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


ALAM N'YO BANG DALAWA ANG MOONS NG MARS? 'YUNG DEIMOS AT PHOBOS...
NAHILIG SHA ASHTRONOMY ANG PAMANGKIN KO.
MAS MALIWANAG PALA ANG GABI SA MARS DAHIL DALAWA ANG BUWAN.
BAKIT? DALAWA DIN NAMAN ANG BUWAN NATIN A.
AYAN O.
NAKAKARAMI KA NA, IGNO...
KAMBAL KA PALA, KASIN?
PMJR1101

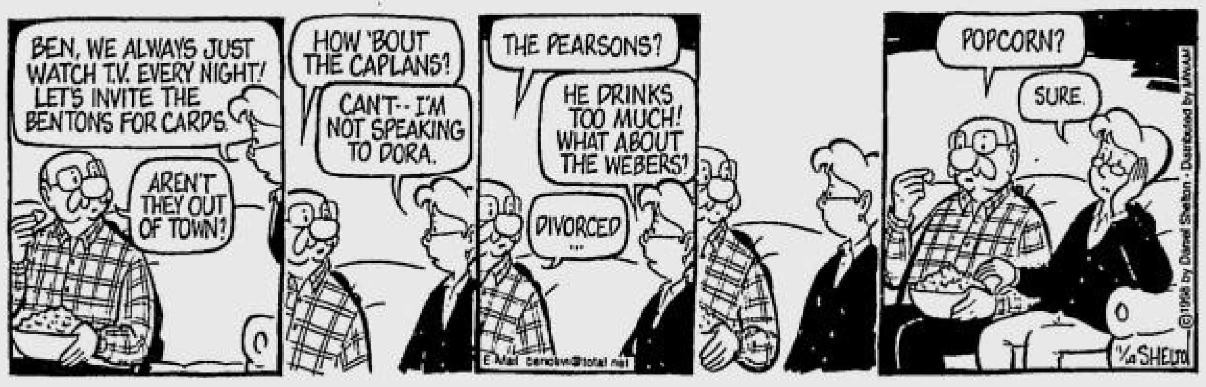
SIMO BY EDGAR DIONELA


PRE, TULUNGAN MO AKO. DALHIN NATIN ANG MISIS KO SA OSPITAL. MANGANGANAK NA SYA!
ANO! DI BA KAPAPANGANAK NYA LANG NOONG ISANG BUWAN?!
O.O NGA. PERO DI MO ALAM KUNG ILAN ANG MISIS KO!
EDIONELA

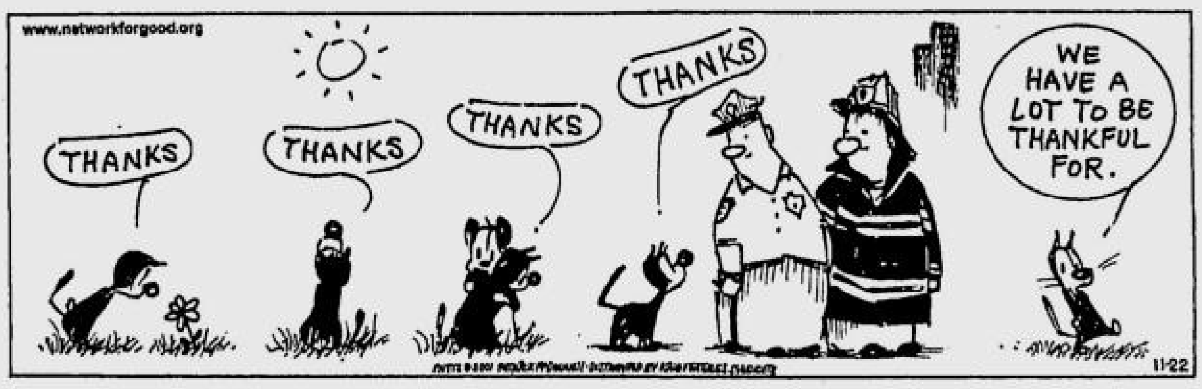
GARAPATA BLOOD BY JOHN PAUL/BENG/MANIX


UY! MASARAP YANG ISAW 'PAG SINAWSAW SA SUKA!
TALAGA?
BWEKK!
?!?
Hmmm... PWEDE NA.
'PAG AKO NATALSIKAN, HA...
NGUYA NGUYA
MANIX:01

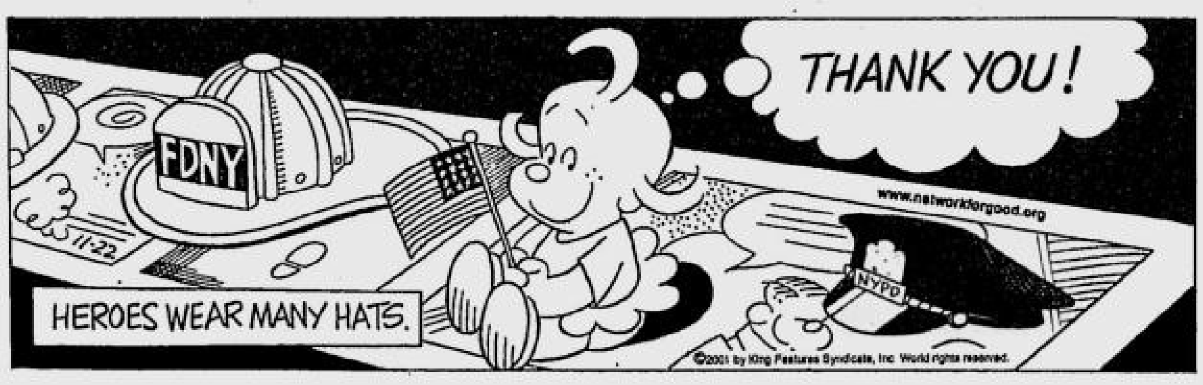
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


BEN, WE ALWAYS JUST WATCH T.V. EVERY NIGHT! LET'S INVITE THE BENTONS FOR CARDS.
AREN'T THEY OUT OF TOWN?
HOW 'BOUT THE CAPLANS?
CAN'T-- I'M NOT SPEAKING TO DORA.
THE PEARSONS?
HE DRINKS TOO MUCH! WHAT ABOUT THE WEBERS?
DIVORCED...
POPCORN?
SURE.
©1998 by Daniel Shelton · Distributed by

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


www.networkforgood.org
THANKS
THANKS
THANKS
THANKS
WE HAVE A LOT TO BE THANKFUL FOR.
11-22

HI AND LOIS BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


THANK YOU!
FDNY
NYPD
www.networkforgood.org
11-22
HEROES WEAR MANY HATS.
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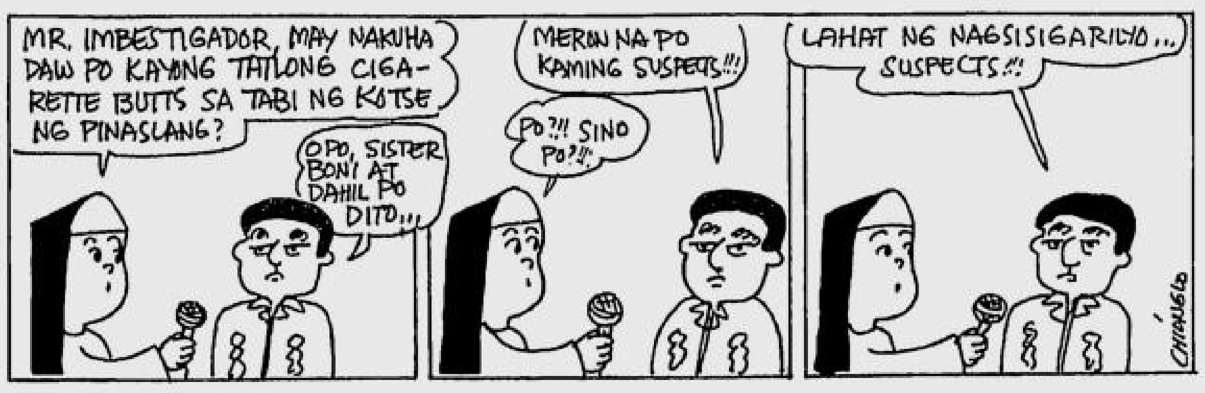
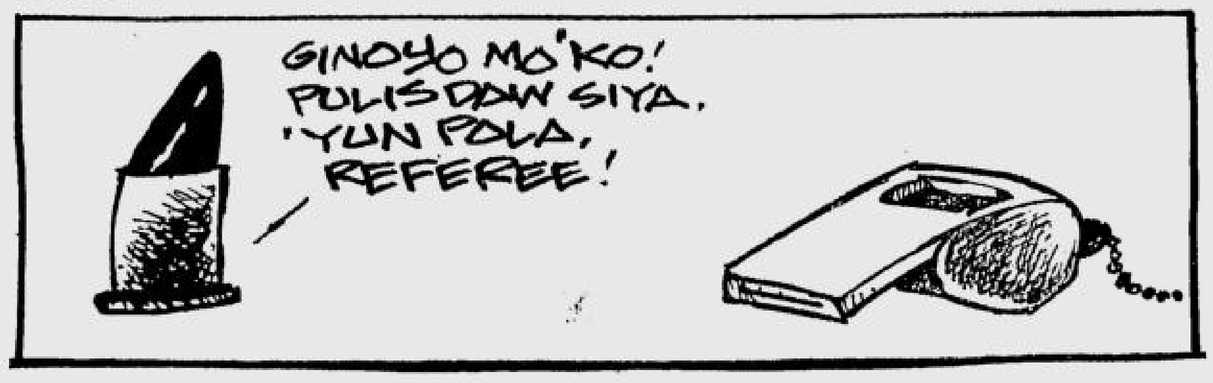
LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MR. IMBESTIGADOR, MAY NAKUHA DAW PO KAYONG TATLONG CIGARETTE BUTTS SA TABI NG KOTSE NG PINASLANG?
OPO, SISTER BONI AT DAHIL PO DITO...
MERON NA PO KAMING SUSPECTS!!!
PO?!! SINO PO?!!
LAHAT NG NAGSISIGARILYO... SUSPECTS!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


GINOYO MO'KO! PULIS DAW SIYA. 'YUN POLA, REFEREE!

SMART SIM Swap Your Way to the MTV Asia Aw

Excitement and anticipation among young Filipinos nationwide for the inaugural MTV Asia Awards to be held in Singapore on February 2, 2002, will surely double with the launch of SMART's Barkada SIM Swap Promo on November 20, 2001, in Manila and on November 22 in the provinces.

SMART Communications, Inc. is the Philippine partner sponsor of the MTV Asia Awards which will pay tribute to the viewers' choices of the most amazing artists or artistic creations across the region.

From November 20, 2001, to January 10, 2002, all SMART Group/Barkada SIM swappers with a minimum of four members each shall be given a raffle coupon for a chance to win a trip to Singapore for 4 plus 1 person to watch the MTV Asia Awards with Php 25,000.00 pocket money for each winning member.

All group SIM swappers should fill out the raffle coupon with their name, address, SMART Buddy/Gold celfone number, signature and submit their entries to authorized TSI agents or SMART Customer Care Officers.

Interested promo participants may group SIM swap at all TSI branches, SMART Wireless Centers or any SMART school or mall event nationwide.

Four lucky groups will win a trip to Singapore to watch the MTV Asia Awards plus pocket money of Php 25,000.00 cash for each member.

Twenty different awards will be given out at the 2002 MTV Asia Awards, including 11 "Favorite Music Artist" awards from territories around the region, six "International Music" category awards, one "Fashion" category award, one "Film" category award and one "Inspiration" award. Nominees for each category have been compiled from votes of key figures from the Asian

Simply amazing Christ
SMART
Barkada
SIM SWAP
Raffle
A SMART SIM Swap could be your barkada's best gimmick ever!
Party the night away in Boat Quay!
Shop 'til you drop on Orchard Road!
MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION
2002
ASIAAWARD
20
Group SIM
SMART

Join the SMART Barkada SIM Swap and you & your friends could win a trip for five to the MTV Asia Awards in Singapore on February 2, 2002! Plus, each barkada member gets P25,000.00 shopping money as well! It's so easy! You can switch to SMART Buddy or SMART Gold. So hurry, promo runs from November 20, 2001 until January 10, 2002 only. Bring your buddies to any SMART Wireless Center, TSI branch, SMART school or mall event and swap to SMART today! This could be one gimmick your barkada will never forget!

The freedom of choice! SMART zed PLUS SIM PACK or SMART MONEY SIM PACK.

If you choose to switch to SMART you can take your pick of these revolutionary SIM cards:

- SMART zed plus SIM card - the Super SIM that lets you personalize your menu for click-and-browse access to the services you want!
- SMART Money SIM card - lets you shop without cash in thousands of establishments nationwide!

And both offer P100 worth of free airtime!

PROMO MECHANICS:

1. Promo duration is from November 20, 2001- January 10, 2002. Promo beg
2. There are two ways of forming a barkada and joining the promo:
   a) Four or five active non-SMART pre-paid subscribers except Talk N' Text
   b) Four or five active non-SMART post-paid subscribers can swap their SI
   * Those who will group SIM swap to SMART Gold must submit the follow ID, proof of billing address and financial documents for Plans 3000 and
   * Watch out for the new SMART Gold Subscription Plans.
   * SIM swappers must present an open-line Dual Band celfone with an acti
3. All barkada SIM swappers will be given a group raffle coupon.
4. All barkada/group SIM swappers should fill out a group raffle coupon with Group SIM Swappers can submit their coupons at authorized TSI branches, mall events and school blitzes.
   * Only TSI agents who are authorized by TSI/SMART to man in SMART/T
5. A total of four (4) barkadas will win a trip to Singapore for five to watch t draw on January 15, 2002.
6. SMART will only shoulder the expenses of the trip for a maximum of 5 per
7. Winners will be notified through a voice call, text message, and registered
8. Prizes may be claimed at Ace Saatchi and Saatchi, 10th floor, Feliza Bldg.,
9. Winners must present the winning raffle stub, notification letter, valid ID, a and passports.
10. All employees of SMART Communications, Inc., Pilipino Telephone Corpo consanguinity are disqualified from the promo.

*SMART will only shoulder the cost for a maximum of five barkada members. Winning bar in the winning barkada, SMART will not shoulder the cost for the guardian. Winning gro
*Individual SIM swappers from November 20, 2001 - January 10, 2002 may also win P20,
*Customer Care Officers, TSI agents and TSI counter representatives may also win P30,00
*Customer Care Officers, TSI agents and TSI counter representatives may also win P10,00

ards

music, entertainment and fashion industries.

Winners will be revealed at a ceremony to be held before a live audience of more than 7,000 fans at the Singapore Indoor Stadium, which will include the four lucky barkadas who will win the Singapore trip from SMART's Barkada SIM Swap Promo. The ceremony will be taped and aired to over 150 million viewers across Asia, with highlights being seen on MTV's channels around the world.

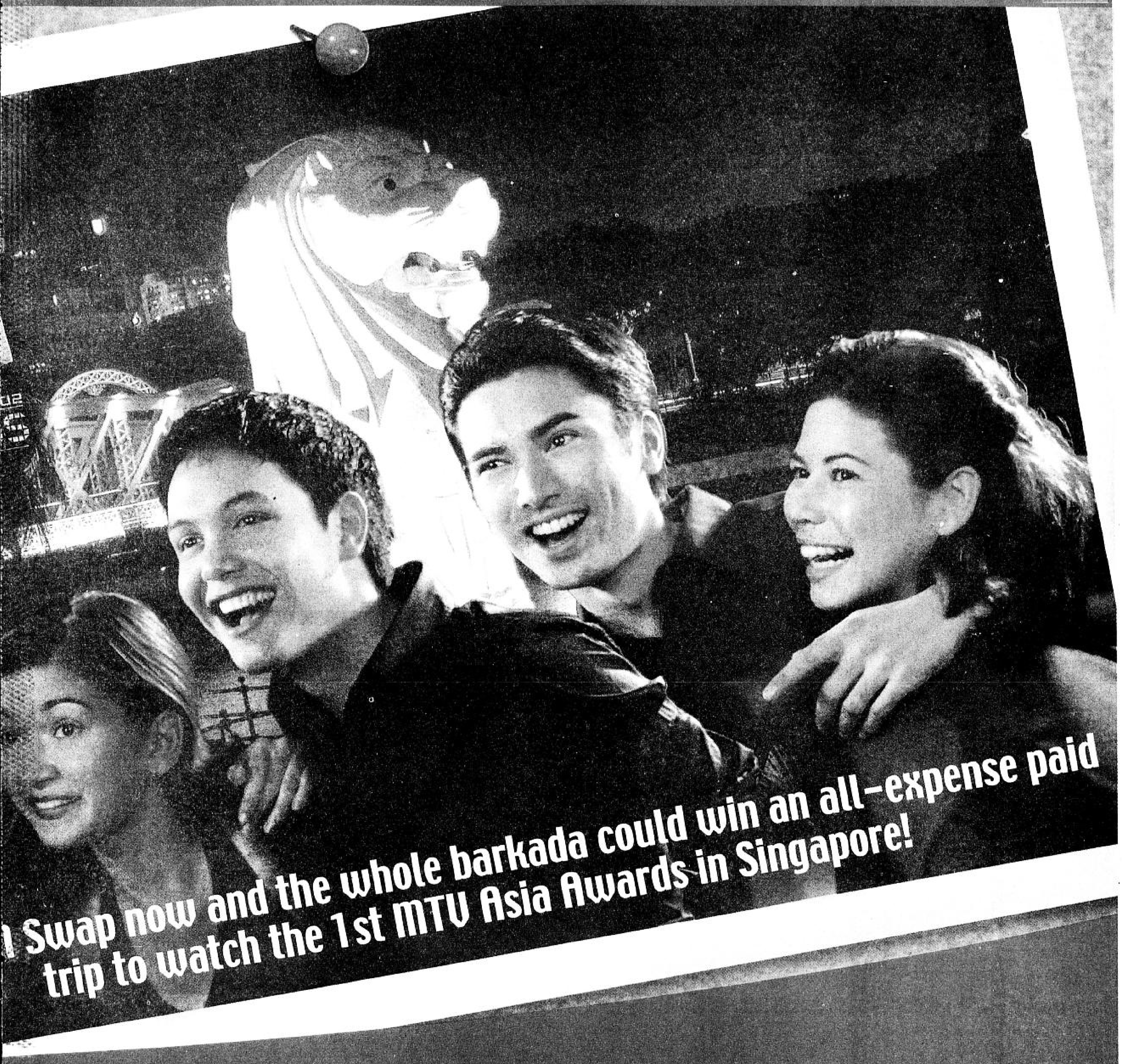
Nominees for each category will be promoted on MTV's six channels and online sites across Asia from November 12, 2001.

All award categories (except for the "Inspiration" award) will be selected by the viewers and fans in 10 markets through an open poll from November 12, 2001, to January 18, 2002. Viewers can vote at local voting partner outlets in each market. In the Philippines, they can also vote by texting MTV to 211 through SMART. The "Inspiration" award will be a special honor presented by MTV to either an inspiring individual whom young adults across Asia admire, or to an organization that has contributed to the betterment of Asian youth and the whole region.

According to Frank Brown, President of MTV Asia, "It's really exciting for us to be presenting the first-ever pan-regional awards show recognizing and paying tribute to the talented artists loved by viewers across Asia. The MTV Asia Awards will provide a platform to bring together international and Asian talent, and to showcase them globally via our network of channels."

SMART Communications is proud to be a part of this momentous celebration of youth culture through the universal language of music, and joins MTV Asia and its other partners in honoring the vast and diverse talents that the region has to offer.

mas treats from SMART


Swap now and the whole barkada could win an all-expense paid trip to watch the 1st MTV Asia Awards in Singapore!

ins on November 22, 2001 in the provinces.

subscribers can swap their SIM Cards for SMART Buddy SIM packs.
Cards for SMART Gold subscriptions.
ing documents: completely filled-out Service Application Form (SAF) and waiver forms, valid
4000.

ve non-SMART SIM card (except Talk N' Text SIM card).

their names, addresses, SMART Buddy/Gold celfone numbers and signatures.
SMART Wireless Centers, or to any SMART/TSI representative in SMART/TSI sponsored events,

SI sponsored events, mall events or school blitzes are allowed to conduct the SIM swap.
e MTV Asia Awards plus pocket money of P25,000.00 for each barkada member in the raffle

sons per winning group. The prize is convertible to cash (P200,000.00).
mail.
108 Herrera St., Legaspi Village Makati City.
nd their SMART SIM cards. Winners of the trip to Singapore must also present birth certificates

ration and their respective ad agencies as well as relatives up to the second degree of affinity or

kada with member/s under 18 years old must be accompanied by a guardian. If there are already 5 members
p with 4 members 18 years old & above may bring along one more companion who is of legal age also.
00.00 on the January 15, 2002 raffle draw.
.00 cash prize if they facilitated the group SIM swap of the winning group SIM swappers.
.00 cash prize if they facilitated the SIM swap of the winning individual SIM swapper.

SMART

Simply Amazing!

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SMART is the proud official partner sponsor in the Philippines. The MTV Asia Awards is proudly sponsored by SMART in the Philippines.

*See posters and flyers for details.

SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 633-9999

NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR 4173868

1	TRIP
2	THE ONE
3	HARRY POTTER
4	ANO BANG MERON KA?
5	SERENDIPITY
6	WEYT A MINIT
7	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
8	KAPITAN AMBO

SM CENTERPOINT 7169522 -7161416

1	KAPITAN AMBO
2	GLITTER
3	HARRY POTTER
4	WEYT A MINIT
5	HARRY POTTER
6	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
7	SERENDIPITY
8	THE ONE
9	TRIP
10	ANO BANG MERON KA?

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9350049

1	TRIP
2	KING OF GLADIATORS
3	SERENDIPITY
4	HARRY POTTER
5	WEYT A MINIT
6	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
7	HARRY POTTER
8	THE ONE
9	ANO BANG MERON KA?
10	HARRY POTTER
11	GLITTER
12	KAPITAN AMBO

SM CITY MANILA 5229240

1	SERENDIPITY
2	GLITTER
3	KING OF GLADIATORS
4	HARRY POTTER
5	JOY RIDE
6	THE ONE
7	ANO BANG MERON KA?
8	WEYT A MINIT
9	HARRY POTTER
10	TRIP
11	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
12	KAPITAN AMBO

SM MEGAMALL 6331901 • 6339401

1	HARRY POTTER
2	SERENDIPITY
3	CAPT. CORRELLI'S
4	HARRY POTTER
5	GLITTER
6	THE ONE
7	TRIP
8	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
9	ANO BANG MERON KA?
10	HARRY POTTER
11	KAPITAN AMBO
12	WEYT A MINIT

SM TUTUBAN 2514362

1	HARRY POTTER
2	ANO BANG MERON KA?
3	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
4	WEYT A MINIT

SM CITY NORTH EDSA 9295452

1	KAPITAN AMBO
2	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
3	WEYT A MINIT
4	ANO BANG MERON KA?
5	SERENDIPITY
6	GLITTER
7	HARRY POTTER
8	HARRY POTTER
9	CAPT. CORRELLI'S
10	TRIP
11	DUGONG ASO
12	THE ONE

SM SOUTHMALL 8066888

1	SERENDIPITY
2	WEYT A MINIT
3	HARRY POTTER
4	GLITTER
5	THE ONE
6	ANO BANG MERON KA?
7	KAPITAN AMBO
8	HARRY POTTER
9	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
10	DUGONG ASO

SM GUADALUPE COMM'L 8820965

1	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
2	HARRY POTTER
3	KAPITAN AMBO

SM CEBU 2313916

1	TRIP
2	CAPT. CORRELLI'S
3	HARRY POTTER
4	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
5	ANO BANG MERON KA?
6	BUBBLE BOY
7	HARRY POTTER

SM ILOILO 3209422

1	TRIP
2	CLOSED
3	CAPT. CORRELLI'S
4	GHOST OF MARS
5	ANO BANG MERON KA?
6	HARRY POTTER
7	CLOSED
8	SAKIM SA PAG IBIG

SM PAMPANGA 7126015

1	HARRY POTTER
2	GHOST OF MARS
3	ANO BANG MERON KA?
4	KAPITAN AMBO
5	DUGONG ASO
6	WEYT A MINIT

SM SUCAT 8294675

1	SERENDIPITY
2	WEYT A MINIT
3	HARRY POTTER
4	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO

SM DAVAO

1	THE ONE
2	WEYT A MINIT
3	ANO BANG MERON KA?
4	SERENDIPITY
5	DOS EKIS
6	HARRY POTTER

DIGITAL dts SOUND DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND•EX

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1	HARRY POTTER	In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
2	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO	In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3	HARRY POTTER	In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
4	KAPITAN AMBO	In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

GLORIETTA 4

1	HARRY POTTER	In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
2	HARRY POTTER	In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3	HARRY POTTER THX	In DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	CAPT. CORRELLI'S MANDOLIN	In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5	SERENDIPITY	In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6	HARRY POTTER	In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7	GLITTER	In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

Art Films

GREENBELT

1	HARRY POTTER	In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
2	HARRY POTTER	In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3	HARRY POTTER.	In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
4	REGINE AT THE MOVIES NOV. 23, 24, 30/ DEC. 1, 7, 8, 15, 16	Onstage

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1	HARRY POTTER THX	In DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2	HARRY POTTER	In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3	HARRY POTTER	In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	SERENDIPITY	In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5	GLITTER	In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DDS)	ANO BANG MERON KA?
2 (SDDS)	THE ONE
3 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
4 GOLD (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	SERENDIPITY
6 GOLD (SDDS)	GLITTER
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	HARRY POTTER
8	WEYT A MINIT
9	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
10	KAPITAN AMBO

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	
2	
3 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
4	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
5	DUGONG ASO
6 (DTS)	KAPITAN AMBO
Golden Pearl THX	

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 831.6603

1	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
2	HARRY POTTER
3	DUGONG ASO

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
2	WEYT A MINIT
3	KAPITAN AMBO
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HARRY POTTER
5	DUGONG ASO

METROPOLIS star
(Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	DUGONG ASO
2	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
3	WEYT A MINIT
4	KAPITAN AMBO
5	ANO BANG MERON KA?
6	HARRY POTTER
7	RESERVE
8	RESERVE

PREMIERE CINEMA LUCASFILM THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2011 to13

1	HARRY POTTER

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	TRAINING DAY
2	ANO BANG MERON KA?

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515

1	DUGONG ASO
2	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
3	KAPITAN AMBO

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	DUGONG ASO
A	HARRY POTTER

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	HARRY POTTER
2	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
3	
4	KAPITAN AMBO

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8568

1 (DOLBY)	HARRY POTTER
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	DUGONG ASO
5	KAPITAN AMBO
6	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
7 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
8 (SDDS)	GLITTER
9 (DOLBY)	ANO BANG MERON KA?

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	KAPITAN AMBO

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	ANO BANG MERON KA?
2	WEYT A MINIT
3	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
4 (SDDS)	KAPITAN AMBO
5	DUGONG ASO
6 (DOLBY)	HARRY POTTER
7 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
8	CAPT. CORRELLI'S
9	THE ONE

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
2	KAPITAN AMBO
3	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
4	DUGONG ASO
5 (SDDS)	GLITTER
6	WEYT A MINIT
7 (DOLBY)	HARRY POTTER
8	ANO BANG MERON KA?

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	KAPITAN AMBO
2	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
3 (DTS)	WEYT A MINIT
4	DUGONG ASO
5 (SDDS)	HARRY POTTER

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	KAPITAN AMBO

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	DUGONG ASO

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	DUGONG ASO
Lords	DUGONG ASO
Jennet	RESERVE

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	
2	KAPITAN AMBO
3	HARRY POTTER

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	KAPITAN AMBO

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	HARRY POTTER
2	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE

New Divisoria Mall
DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
2	KAPITAN AMBO
3	DUGONG ASO
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	HARRY POTTER

Baclaran LRT
LRT CINEMA
tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)	KAPITAN AMBO
2	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
3	

Berma
tel 879.2029

1	HARRY POTTER
2	DUGONG ASO

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	HARRY POTTER
2	DUGONG ASO
3	
4	

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	KAPITAN AMBO
2	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
3 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	KAPITAN AMBO
2 (DTS)	ANO BANG MERON KA?
3 (DOLBY)	HARRY POTTER
4	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	KAPITAN AMBO
2 (DOLBY)	WEYT A MINIT
3 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
4	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO

Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	ANO BANG MERON KA?
2	KAPITAN AMBO
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	DUGONG ASO
2	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
3	KAPITAN AMBO
4 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	HARRY POTTER
2	WEYT A MINIT
3 (DTS)	KAPITAN AMBO
4	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
5	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	HARRY POTTER
2	KAPITAN AMBO
3	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	HARRY POTTER
2	KAPITAN AMBO
3	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	WEYT A MINIT
2	TRIP
3	ANO ABNG MERON KA?

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	KAPITAN AMBO
2	HARRY POTTER
3	WEYT A MINIT

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	KAPITAN AMBO
2 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	CLOSED

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
2	KAPITAN AMBO
3	WEYT A MINIT

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	GHOST OF MARS
2	ANO BANG MERON KA?
3	HARRY POTTER
4	WEYT A MINIT

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	GHOST OF MARS
2	WEYT A MINIT
3	SOON TO OPEN
4 (DTS ES)	HARRY POTTER

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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For VIP, Gold, Silver membership, call: 759-5158 to 59
For reservations, call: 751-2010 to 13

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http://www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

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GALLERIA 632-9115-16 /633-7641loc. 279

① THX	HARRY POTTER
2	GLITTER
3	HARRY POTTER
4	SERENDIPITY
5	HARRY POTTER
6	EARTHQUAKE
7	CAPT. CORRELLI'S
8	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
9	KAPITAN AMBO
10	JOY RIDE

ERMITA 536-7809 TO 12

1	HARRY POTTER
2	EARTHQUAKE
3	KAPITAN AMBO
4	SERENDIPITY
5	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
6	GLITTER
7	HARRY POTTER

NOVALICHES 935-3229 to 31

1	GLITTER
2	GLITTER
3	EARTHQUAKE
4	HARRY POTTER
5	HARRY POTTER
6	SERENDIPITY
7	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
8	KAPITAN AMBO

IMUS (046) 471-6188

1	HARRY POTTER
2	DUGONG ASO
3	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
4	WEYT AT MINIT
5	EARTHQUAKE
6	KAPITAN AMBO

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453

1	HARRY POTTER
2	HARRY POTTER
3	ANO BANG MERON KA?
4	EXTREME FORCE
5	LEGALLY BLONDE
6	TRIP

METRO EAST 632-9115-16 /633-7641loc. 279

1	ANO BANG MERON KA?
2	DUGONG ASO
3	KAPITAN AMBO
4	GLITTER
5	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
6	HARRY POTTER
7	HARRY POTTER
8	EARTHQUAKE

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	ANO BANG MERON KA?
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	KAPITAN AMBO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	WEYT A MINIT
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	HARRY POTTER
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	GLITTER
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	THE ONE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	EARTHQUAKE
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	HARRY POTTER
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SIDHI / CLIMAX
ODEON	HARRY POTTER
ODEON-2	KAPITAN AMBO
ROBEN	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	CROCODILE / ST. FRANCIS VILLE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
REMAR	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
REMAR-2	HARRY POTTER
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
B	KAPITAN AMBO
C	DUGONG ASO
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	GLITTER
CINEMA-2	HARRY POTTER
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	DUGONG ASO
CINEMA-2	KAPITAN AMBO
CINEMA-3	TRIP
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE ONE
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	KING OF GLADIATORS
CINEMA-6	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
CINEMA-7	ANO BANG MERON KA?
CINEMA-8	CAPT. CORRELLI'S
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-12	SERENDIPITY
CINEMA-14	GLITTER
CINEMA-15	WEYT A MINIT
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	SERENDIPITY
CINEMA-2	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-4	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-5	GLITTER
CINEMA-6	HARRY POTTER
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

ALCASID. "A Better Man" is his latest release.

On-line album launch

VIVA Records and Soundbuzz bring the on-line launch of Ogie Alcasid's latest album, "A Better Man," under his own label Giant Music, released by Viva Records.

Soundbuzz will develop an on-line promo for Ogie with a microsite. This microsite will include the following: a free download of the acoustic version of the song "Pangako Ko "(one of the cuts from the new album), streaming of all the songs in the album for a listening party, trivia question contest and a photo gallery. Soundbuzz will work with the following partner sites for the promo: Pinoyexchange.com, Getasia.com and Pinoycentral.com.

Just log on to Soundbuzz for free CDs of Ogie's new album.

To promote his new album, Ogie will go to Davao today at the newly opened SM Davao, and to Cebu on Sunday, Nov. 25, at SM Cebu.

Ogie will sing a few tracks from the new album. He will also give-away prizes to CD and cassette buyers. The shows are presented by Shoe-Mart, Viva Records and The Professional Group.

Ogie continues to promote "A Better Man" in the top-rating Sunday variety show, "SOP" on GMA 7.

On Nov. 25, Ogie will sing "Sana, Bukas Mahal Mo na Ako," in a special presentation of "SOP" in Cebu.

On Dec. 2, Ogie sings "Sana" live but in a music-video fashion courtesy of director Louie Ignacio.

On Dec. 9, Ogie will perform "Ikaw Lamang," with a live string quartet.

Watch out for the premiere of Ogie's new music video for the first single, "Ikaw Sana," culled from the album, in the director's cut of "SOP." The music video is directed by Louie Ignacio.

Dingdong at Ratsky's in Cebu

DINGDONG Avanzado mounts his successful concert series, "Up Close" today, Nov. 22 at Ratsky's Cebu.

"Up Close" is Dingdong's first series of concerts after his three-year stint as councilor of Quezon City.

The concert series backtracks Dingdong's inspiring and illustrious 14-year singing and recording career.

Fans can expect him to dish out some of his most memorable hits like "Basta't Kasama Kita" and "Wish I Could" among other production numbers.

After "Up Close," Dingdong will direct his wife, Jessa Zaragoza, in the latter's concert, "Mesmerize," at Music Museum next month.

Dingdong was also a part of the recently concluded "Jam Himig Handog sa Kabataan" as an interpreter to Lanie Macaraeg and Luchie Pomareda's "Si Eddie" (which won for the Texter's Choice and Listener's Choice Awards).

'HARRY POTTER'

A 'Potterite' appreciates the film's fidelity to the book

BY RUBEN. M. CRUZ JR.
Contributor

REVIEW

I HAVE read all four Harry Potter books.

Because of the unbearably long wait for J.K. Rowling's Book Five, I have even reread them.

I am not ashamed to say that at 31, I have become what they call a "Potterite."

I went to the premiere of the film adaptation of "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" proudly wearing a Quidditch sweatshirt bearing the Gryffindor insignia of a lion on the chest and "Potter 56" on the back. The envious looks I got from fellow Potterites less than half my age, I must say, gave me great pleasure. If I hadn't gotten an invitation to the premiere, I would have (uncharacteristically) asked, perhaps even begged for one.

In truth, however, this is a film I never wanted made in the first place. I became fearful ever since I saw the initial press articles about the book's film adaptation. Adapting books for the big screen is a tedious process and there have been few successes. I didn't want the "sacred texts" of Harry Potter desecrated for the sake of cinematic appeal and greater profits.

$125 million

Thankfully, no such sacrifice was made.

For two and a half hours, I experienced Hollywood's spin on "Harry Potter and The Sorcerer's Stone." For a Potterite, fidelity has never been a more appreciated virtue.

I am delighted that the filmmakers included almost everything in the book in their adaptation. But it isn't just what they brought onscreen but how they brought them. If the only limits are those of vision, then this film has little to worry about.

Potterites have always wondered what Hogwarts is like, wanted to see how exciting Quidditch really is, and dreamed of getting lost in the confusion of Diagon Alley. The filmmakers seem to have fully used their $125 million kitty to satisfy these longings and more.

Director Chris Columbus and his production team (including cinematographer John Seale, production designer Stuart Craig and costume designer Judiana Makovsky) might as well have gotten special Muggle passes from the Ministry of Magic. For how else could they have gotten the world of Harry Potter so right?

Their visual interpretations might have sprung from the imaginations of Rowling herself, the magic from her pages rubbing off on film.

Magic, emotions

Screenwriter Steve Kloves' adaptation takes Potterites on a nostalgic trip that would perhaps prompt some of them to dust off Book One and give it another read. Dialogues and scenes were lifted exactly as they are in the book, and almost all of the characters and elements appear in the film the way they should.

The feeling of nostalgia helps a Potterite relate more to the magic and the emotions certain scenes convey. I feel sadder, for instance, when Dumbledore, Professor McGonagall and Hagrid leave the infant Harry at the Dursleys' doorstep on Privet Drive, knowing as I already do what happened to his parents and what lies before him at the Muggle household. When Harry sees his parents for the first time in the Mirror of Erised, my eyes get watery.

Peter, the Potterite beside me who's wearing a T-shirt with the cover jacket of "Harry Potter and The Goblet of Fire" hand-painted on it, takes out his hankie and blows his nose. What can I say? We are what we are.

As the film moves from one familiar scene to another, I notice boys and girls of all ages seated around me whispering helpful hints to their non-Potterite companions to help explain scenes and ideas, initiating them in the ways of "Potteriology."

They point out objects at the screen that might otherwise be missed by the ignorant and nudge those whose attention has momentarily shifted to their cell phones (it seems two and a half hours might be a bit too long for non-Potterites).

Perfect casting

I hear rustles of anticipation in the audience when Harry steps into Olivander's Fine Wands Shop. And when he and his friends unwrap the Nimbus 2000, I could swear people fall silent if only for a moment, perhaps the sound of pining before admiration.

From hereon, it would be hard to read the three remaining books of the Harry Potter series without seeing the faces and hearing the voices of the actors who play the characters in the film. From Robbie Coltrane's inspired performance as Rubeus Hagrid, Hogwarts' half-giant Keeper of Keys and Grounds, to Alan Rickman's sinister Snape, the Professor of Potions, down to the shorter roles of John Hurt (as Olivander), Fiona Shaw and Richard Griffiths (as the Dursley couple), the casting is perfect.

The young leads, Danielle Radcliffe, Rupert Grint and Emma Watson (Harry Potter, Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger, respectively) turn in very natural performances—not easy when you consider that what would perhaps be the biggest film franchise in history rests on their shoulders.

I leave the theater humming John William's score.

I think it makes for a good lullaby and I decide to try it out on my babies as soon as I get home.

In the parking lot, I see new converts lining up to buy Harry Potter books. Perhaps they're buying the dream as well. If nothing else, the film has made them believe.

STAND-UP COMEDIANS IN AD CONGRESS
Upcoming stand-up comedians Ace Salcedo (left) and Jeff Vasquez will be the featured performers at the Ad Congress at the Waterfront Hotel in Lahug, Cebu City, starting today, Nov. 22. They will be joined by other artists such as Jeffrey Hi-dalgo and Jenine Desiderio. Ace and Jeff perform regularly at Music Box, Timog Ave., Quezon City.

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HARRY POTTER - GP 12:05, 3:15, 6:25, 9:35	GLITTER - P 13 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:30	HARRY POTTER - GP 12:50, 4:00, 7:10, 10:20

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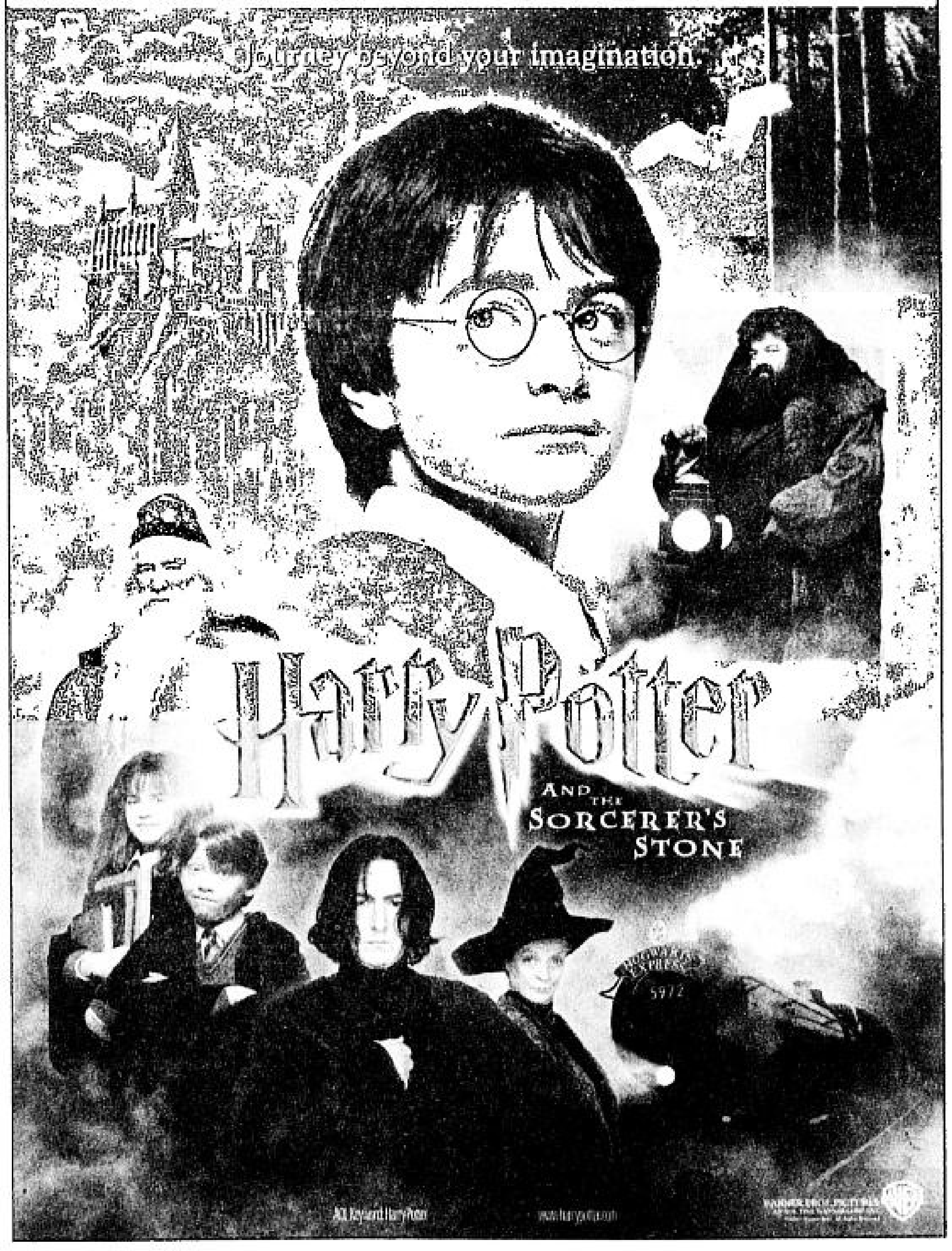

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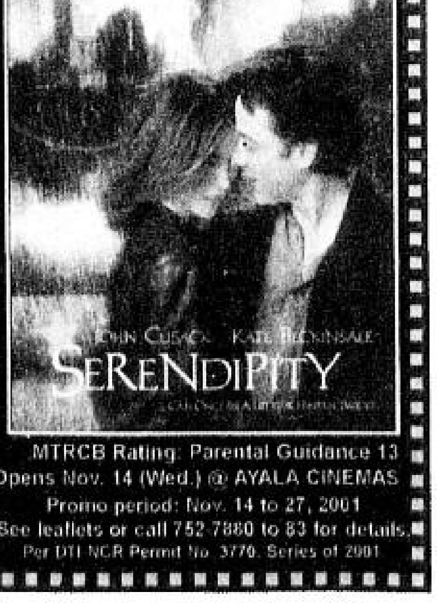

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MARIAH CAREY
glitter

From 'orphan' to pop superstar

Mariah in a heartwarming rags-to-riches music drama

Pop music legend Mariah Carey makes her major feature film debut in Columbia Pictures' GLITTER, an emotional and heartwarming drama with music featuring her hits "Never Too Far" and "Loverboy."

GLITTER is the story of a young singer, Billie Frank, who overcomes a troubled childhood and struggles to find her true family and her true voice.

Abandoned as a child by her mother, Billie grows up in an orphanage. Discovered by a charismatic "bad boy" deejay who becomes her lover, she is soon on her way to pop superstardom.

NOW SHOWING AT A CINEMA NEAR YOU

ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Excessive and tedious focus on Robin P

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

SHARON Cuneta's Sunday-evening show on TV is usually informative and entertaining, but her long focus on **Robin Padilla** last Nov. 18 was excessive and consequently tedious.

We know that she had to plug their new movie together ("Pagdating ng Panahon," showing anytime now), but there must be a way of doing this without straining viewers' patience.

After all, Robin may be a star, but he isn't that great an achiever or that complex a person to deserve such extended treatment—even if his birthday *is* coming up soon.

Besides, most of the potentially interesting or controversial aspects of his life and career have already been done to the point of tedium on other TV shows.

It's true that Robin's transformation from the movies' signature Bad Boy to responsible father and husband is remarkable, and he should indeed be congratulated for having successfully modified his screen image to include non-action formats. But these and other plus points could have been focused on for a shorter period of time, for greater impact.

The show also had Robin talking to his children in Australia, and they wept during their phone conversation. This was nice and tender and loving, etc., but it was also a bit much. All that, just to increase interest in a star and his new movie? Sense of focus, context and circumspection, everyone . . .

Movies on TV

ON the HBO channel today, Nov. 22, 1 p.m., "Band of Brothers, 6: Bastogne." In the dead of winter, in the forest outside of Bastogne, Belgium, the men of Easy Company struggle to hold the line alone while fending off frostbite and hunger. Medic **Eugene Roe** is close to combat exhaustion, but finds friendship with a Belgian nurse.

Easy Co. spends a miserable Christmas in the trenches and receives news that the German Army's demand for surrender was roundly rebuffed by Gen. McAuliffe.

Friday, Nov. 23, 5:30 p.m., "Trading Places." What happens when a streetsmart con man and a rich snob switch lives? Outrageous comedy, especially when they're played by **Eddie Murphy** and **Dan Aykroyd**.

At the whim of conniving brothers played by **Don Ameche** and **Ralph Bellamy**, Aykroyd goes from wealth to woe, while Murphy hits the high life as a successful commodities broker. But when the game is up—watch out, Wall Street!

At 1:45 a.m., "Dog Park." **Natasha Henstridge** and **Janeane Garofalo** are among a group of friends navigating their way through the Dating Chain in search of love and commitment.

Saturday, Nov. 24 at 6:30 a.m., "Where's Marlowe?" Two budding filmmakers are bent on making their movie a success, even if they have to star in it themselves, pass on directing honors to their lead actor, and get their hands dirty trying to solve a murder mystery.

At 1:15 p.m., "The Hunt for Red October."

At 9 p.m., "Girl, Interrupted." **Susanna Kaysen (Winona Ryder)** takes a break from the real world when she spends a year in a mental institution. An enigmatic inmate (**Angelina Jolie**) teaches her to get in touch with her darker side.

At 2:30 a.m., "The Red Violin."

On the Cinemax channel:

Thursday, Nov. 22, 9:45 a.m., "For Whom the Bell Tolls."

Friday, Nov. 23, 8:30 a.m., "Bugsy."

At 3:30 p.m., "Marnie."

At 5:45 p.m., "Private Benjamin."

Saturday, Nov. 24, 12:15 p.m., "The End of the Affair."

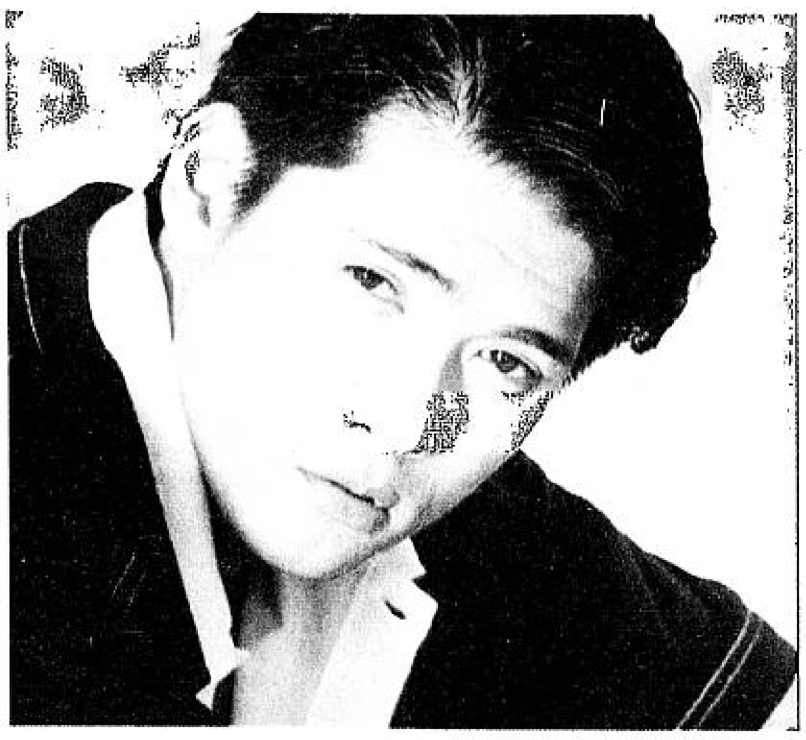
At 2 p.m., "The Ugly American."

At 7:15 p.m., "What Planet Are You From?"

'Murder in Small Town X'

STARTING this Sunday, Nov. 25 at 9:30 p.m., Studio 23 will telecast its new "reality TV" show, "Murder in Small Town X." It's up to 10 contestants to solve the town of Sunrise, Maine's most disturbing crime to date—the brutal slaying of the Flint family.

With the help of a sergeant from the Southern California police department, the 10 "investigators" will interview suspects and witnesses and follow possible leads, eventually narrowing the choices down to the man or woman responsible for the murder.

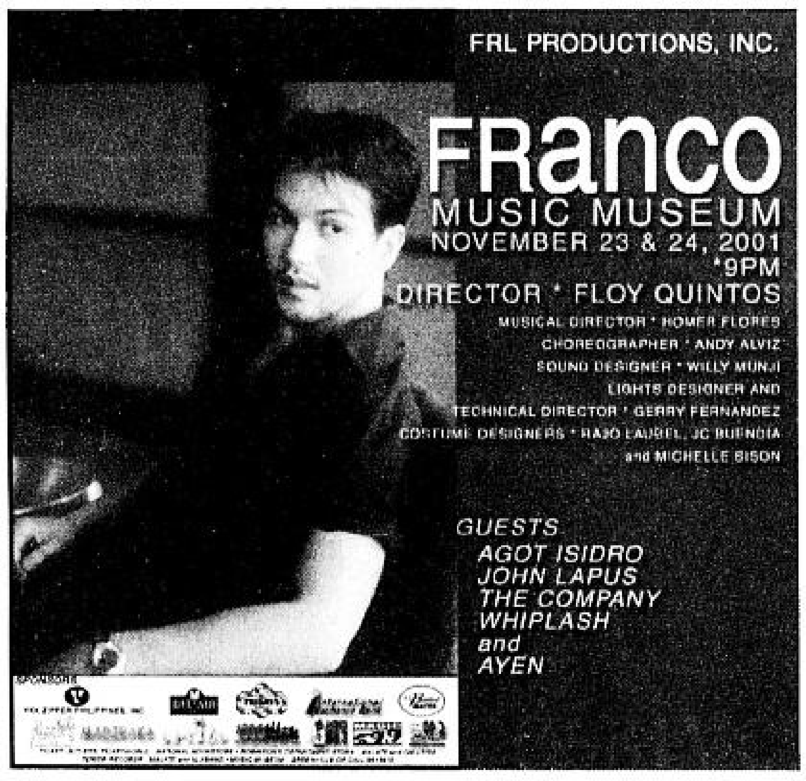


PADILLA

The catch is to play the killer's game. Every three days, the killer will leave an envelope containing a question about the crime, which if answered correctly, will clear one suspect.

Another envelope contains two maps—one, the location of an important clue, the other, the location of the killer. The investigator who picks the second map is eliminated from the game.

Potentially more involving the "Survivor"!



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COSTUME DESIGNERS * RAJO LAUREL, JC BUENDIA
and MICHELLE BISON

GUESTS
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WHIPLASH
and
AYEN

Rage Band rocks to the '80s sound

THE RAGE Band whips up a rock n' roll frenzy at Hard Rock Makati at 9 tonight, as Mossimo, Warner Bros. Pictures and Hard Rock Café wheel back in time to party and celebrate the upcoming movie, "Rock Star," starring Mark Wahlberg and Jennifer Aniston.

The group reaffirmed its status as local music scene's quintessential glam-rock band when it made a comeback last June after a long hiatus from the concert scene.

Best remembered for their manic renditions of '80s rock tunes, lead vocalists Juan Miguel Salvador and Marissa Bunag can still pull off the same vocal histrionics and that have become the band's trademark.

Catch the Rage Band on Nov. 23 at Dish, Nov. 27 at Strumm's, Makati and Nov. 29 at Hard Rock Makati.

The band's December gigs include Strumm's Makati (Tuesdays), Ratsky's Malate (Thursdays) and Dish (Saturdays).

The new Rage Band is composed of Qnie Alcantara (drums), Derick Ileto (bass), Tonet Lipana (guitar), Raymond Leong (second keyboards) and Biv de Vera and Bonggoy Garcia (vocal support).

To highlight the celebration, Mossimo's latest collection, including its new eyewear line, Mossimo Vision, will be presented in a mini-fashion show.

While the party moves on, rock n' roll memorabilia will be on exhibit at Hard Rock Café until Nov. 25. It will feature not only Hard Rock's own collection but also a number of OPM rock bands' mementos and a photo exhibit highlighting selected scenes from the movie, "Rock Star."

Mossimo will also sponsor the advance screening of "Rock Star," Nov. 27 at Glorietta 4, Cinema 6.

If you come in your best rock star outfit, you'll get a chance to win P10,000 worth of gift certificates from Mossimo.

The event is also made possible by Meg, Magic 89.9, 93.9 KC-FM, 99.5 RT, MYX and EMI-Virgin.

RAGE BAND

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Ramcar seeks swap deal for ₱6.2-B debts

By Clarissa S. Batino

BATTERY manufacturer Ramcar Inc. has asked its 19 creditors to allow it to restructure P1.8 billion of its P7.9 billion in total obligations over a 10-year period and to accept a payment-in-kind arrangement for the remaining P6.2 billion.

Ramcar officials said only such a restructuring program would allow the company to pursue an expansion program that would make it the biggest vehicle battery maker in Asia.

Jess Montemayor, Ramcar chief finance officer, said the proposal was to suspend principal payments for five years and to reduce interest charges on the P1.8 billion in loans.

Ramcar wanted to pay the principal from the sixth to the 10th year and also for the banks not to impose any pre-payment penalty in case the company settles its debts earlier than scheduled.

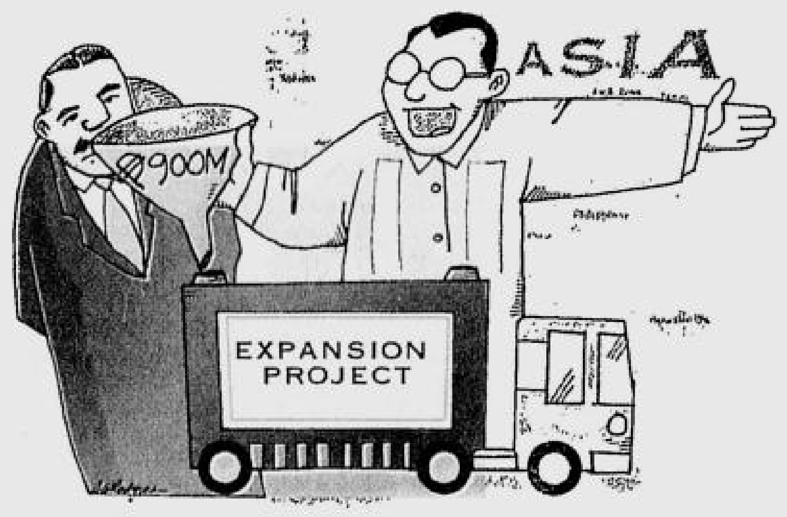
Roberto Garcia, president of two of the biggest battery outfits Oriental and Motolite, said the company needed only at least P900 million to complete an expansion and modernization program in the next two years. He said the group could generate this from operating earnings.

Ramcar produces 12 brands of vehicle batteries and operates two plants that produce 480,000 units a month. The old plant in Novaliches manufactures 180,000 units of dry-charge batteries monthly.

The firm's newer plant in Sta. Maria, Bulacan, produces 300,000 units of maintenance-free batteries a month.

Garcia said the company needed to spend at least P900 million to double the plant's capacity and make Ramcar the biggest battery maker in Asia, better than those from China and Korea.

Ramcar sells 40 percent of its output overseas because the Philippine market only absorbs about 200,000 units a month. The expansion will allow it to produce cheaper batteries and export 80 percent of its output in preparation for the reduction of tariffs by 2003.



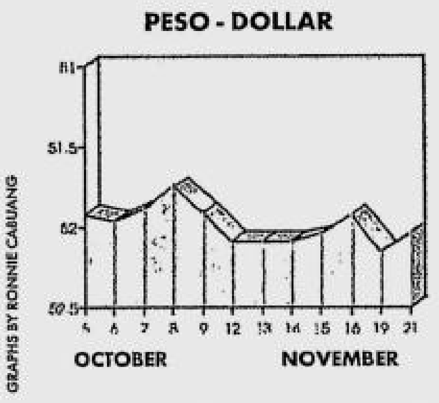
Montemayor, also the company's senior vice president, said several of its creditors had agreed in principle to a dacion en pago arrangement although the others that continued to reject the offer wanted Ramcar to restructure at least P4 billion of the loans and leave less than P4 billion for a debt-for-asset swap.

"We tell the banks that it would be very problematic for the company if we continue to carry P4 billion in debts because if we default,

RAMCAR/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



Peso-Dollar Rate

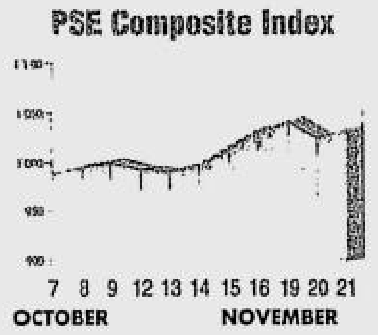
₱52.035 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
Nov. 21, 2001

¥ 123.30 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
Nov. 21, 2001

GOLD:$273.15/273.65
per ounce Hong Kong,
Nov. 21, 2001

STOCK MARKET

Stocks up



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARES ended higher yesterday, buoyed by gains in the property sector, with players shrugging off the recent clashes between supporters of Moro National Liberation Front chair Nur Misuari and government troops in Jolo, traders said.

They said investors were becoming sanguine about outbursts of violence in the south.

Encouraged by the recent drop in interest rates, including a further dip in the T-bill rates this week, bargain hunters have reemerged to pick up stocks seen offering value after sell-downs in recent months, traders said.

Properties have been a major beneficiary of interest rate developments, ING Investment management chief investment officer Paul Garcia said.

"The recent decline in (overnight) interest rates and rates at the T-bill auctions indicates that rates are heading further south and this is making some interest-rate sensitive stocks like properties, look attractive."

He added that expressions of interest from a US firm to acquire up to $1 billion worth of mortgages held by government housing agencies has also buoyed investor interest in the sector.

The main composite index finished up 8.39 points, or 0.82 percent, at 1,033.86.

Turnover grew to P570.40 million from P464.01 million on Tuesday.

The properties sub-sector index rose 9.48 points, or 2.12 percent to 457.36 points.

While traders said the quick bounce-back in the market after Tuesday's gains was an encouraging sign, it was unlikely to be sustained. *Reuters*

Sky, Home start settlement talks with Star TV

By Abigail L. Ho

PROGRAM provider Star TV Group said it was "cautiously optimistic" that a settlement with cable television firms Sky Vision Corp. and Philippine Home Cable Holdings Corp. was near.

David Ilagan, vice president for distribution of Cable Technology Asia Corp., Star TV's Philippine arm, said they were optimistic that the cable operators would accept their settlement proposal and that Star channels would again be seen on SkyCable and Home Cable.

He added that Star decided to present a settlement proposal to the cable firms because the firms themselves presented to the program provider a repayment schedule for their outstanding debts.

"(Home Cable chief) Fritz Server went to Hong Kong early last week. He came out with a schedule of payments that he presented to my bosses there. That's why we decided to present our own settlement proposal," he told the INQUIRER in an interview yesterday.

Aside from the debt repayment schedule, representatives of the cable firms and the program provider also discussed a new long-term carriage deal.

A senior representative of Home and Sky met with ESPN-Star Sports and a Star official last week in Hong Kong to seek a resolution of the dispute.

Repayment of Sky and Home's outstanding debts to Star of P180 million and a new long-term carriage deal were both discussed.

"Reaching an understanding on when they will pay us our outstanding fees opens the way for a new supply deal to be thrashed out. That new supply deal will see Star Movies, Star World, ESPN, Star Sports and National Geographic carried on all the SkyCable, Home Cable and Pilipino Cable systems," Star's regional director Charles Pollard said in a statement.

But SkyCable and Home Cable were not about to accept Star's settlement offer just like that.

"We will take the Star TV channels back if the price is right," Lopez group spokesperson Pedro Chanco III said in a statement yesterday.

Sky Vision managing director Carlos Tria Jr. said they were still discussing the program provider's proposal, but he stressed that the issue was not so much the repayment of their debts but the rates that they would have to pay Star should they agree to carry Star programs again.

"The important thing is for us to come up with a right agreement that both of us can live with. The sooner we come to an agreement, the better. But we haven't really developed terms that we can both live with," he told the INQUIRER in a separate interview yesterday.

But Pollard said he was still "cautiously optimistic of a breakthrough. We are increasingly hopeful that common sense is prevailing."

He added that they had achieved "some real progress" in their nego-

SKY/ B3

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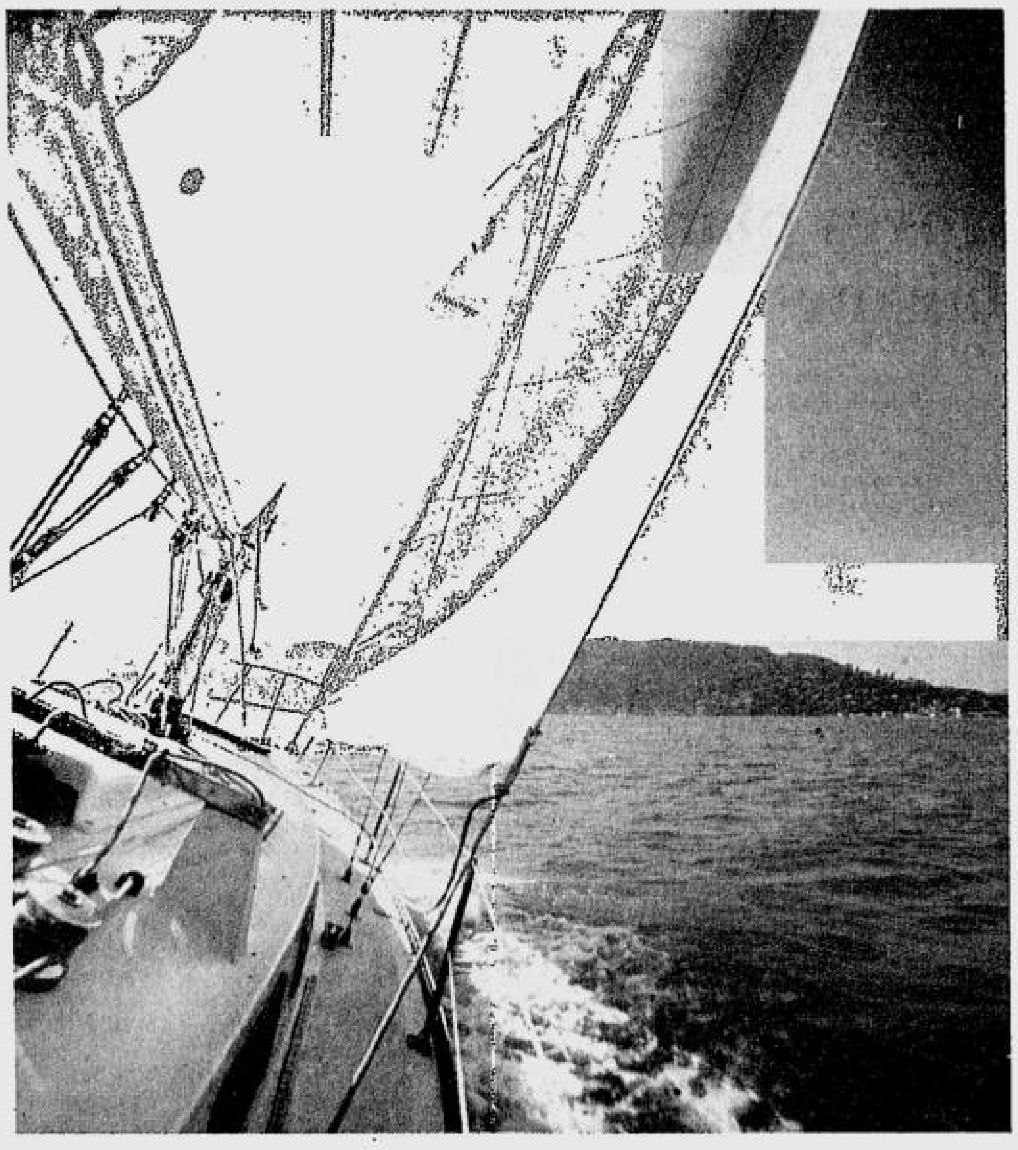

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3778-Series of 2001

Bringing home the bihon

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

WASHINGTON D.C. (via PLDT)—No presidential visit to anywhere is complete unless they put dollars and cents on the bacon that the visiting party brings home.

In this visit of Gloriaetta to the United States, her boys and girls, or anybody in between, placed the worth of the bacon at some $4.7 billion. Wow! We're rich!

The last time I checked, we still weighed the bacon, say, to measure how much of it we were getting and, to do that, we still used kilos and grams, not dollars and cents.

For how do we put absolute value to what we gain out of a visit? Me, when I visit my mother on weekends, I don't count how much *pancit bihon* I eat or, later, bring home.

But a presidential visit must justify all the expenses because people will always ask, "What the hell do we spend all that money for?" In short, it's good old politics!

* * *

ANYWAY, it's even a good sign that Gloriaetta herself felt uneasy about that huge amount that, as per their computation, this cute administration claims to bring home.

In between takes on the set of the live nightly television coverage of this trip, Gloriaetta candidly admitted they even tried to reduce the estimate.

From her side comments off camera, I gathered that she was fearful that cynical guys in media like me would only find a fantastic amount too unbelievable.

Apparently, that $4.7 billion worth of bacon that this presidential trip is bringing home is not fantastic enough for whoever made the computation.

It does not even include the investments of US companies that, based on their claim, they are able to bring home, too. What's this? Another case of *dagdag-bawas*?

* * *

WHY can't we see the trip for what it is? It is to any administration what a sales call is to any company. If we make a sale, hoorah. If not, it's all just part of doing business.

We really needed to do some serious promo for things like investments, trade and tourism. "New improved Philippines," would not do anymore.

According to executives here, you see, US business will readily ignore the Philippines as a business proposition. They say we have a lot of problems.

On top of the list is the problem on law and order. A far, far second is the problem on graft and corruption. Third is our poor infrastructure, which is the worst in the region.

And we do not have instant solutions to those problems. No matter how much bacon Gloriaetta brings home, those problems will remain.

So how do we move? Simple. We don't!

* * *

AS it is, we are already in a little fix in our international payments, but this cool administration chooses to keep itself out of a program with the International Monetary Fund.

That is the good news. It means that we will not have to follow all the one-size-fits-all formula of the IMF for solving economic problems.

But the bad news is that we actually need the money. Based on the projection of this cute administration itself, our balance of payments this year will have a gap of more than $2 billion.

So I asked Gloriaetta how come, for the first time ever, the President of the Republic of the Philippines is heading our negotiating panel with the IMF.

No, she said, we don't have a panel. In fact, we are not negotiating. It's just that the IMF came to see her to have breakfast. I didn't know those guys are freeloaders!

* * *

BY her own account, nevertheless, Gloriaetta seems glad that our economy is not doing that bad for us to run to the IMF for money.

In the past, whenever our government talked to the IMF, it always meant we have a problem! Gloriaetta says we are not in a crisis.

Whatever our problems are, she apparently told the IMF, we can very well solve on our own. We can borrow much more expensive commercial loans, for instance.

And so it seems that a higher interest cost is the price we have to pay for keeping the IMF conditionalities out of our lives for now.

That makes Gloriaetta the only leader who, after being put into power through an upheaval, did not run to the IMF for help. There must be a message there somewhere.

* * *

MAYBE this cute administration wants to project before the world an image of stability. We certainly can't do that if you submit yourself to IMF disciplinary measures.

Enrolling on an IMF program simply tells the rest of the trouble that we are having a crisis. And to Gloriaetta, we are not in a crisis.

From what I gather, after she was briefed by her boys, Gloriaetta told the IMF that we can steer clear from a crisis even with the 9-11 terrorist attack on the United States.

Its effect is worldwide. In New York alone, some 80,000 jobs were already lost. As they say, when the United States sneezes, the rest of the world catches a cold.

Gloriaetta told the IMF that her boys already put in place some anti-crisis measures even before the 9-11 attack. It was not out of foresight, though.

* * *

EARLIER in the year, they foresaw that our exports would drop, when it became clear that the US high-tech bubble would soon burst. It would be a drop in our exports.

So this cute administration readied a borrowing plan that would not hinge on an IMF program. Monetary aggregates were also controlled.

Thus, today our inflation rate is very low, interest rates are down, and even the economy is growing on the strength of domestic consumer demand.

Anyway, even US business expects its economy to start moving up by the second quarter next year. Hopefully, our dollar reserves can still last until then.

But what if something happens? Well, according to Gloriaetta, that's when we tap the IMF for funds. And it better be quick in responding.

Now I don't know about that. It's something the IMF is not really known for.

Lopez infotech unit, Sun Microsystems sign $3-M deal

BY ABIGAIL L. HO

CORPORATE Information Solutions Inc., the information technology arm of the Lopez group of companies, has concluded a $3-million deal with Sun Microsystems Philippines Inc.

The deal will allow CIS and Sun to market "business continuity and recovery services," or BCRS, to companies using Sun's products as well as those selling software and providing information technology services.

The two companies said they expected their project to help information technology companies here meet international standards through Sun's "SunTone Certification and Branding Program."

"By providing SunTone-certified business continuity and recovery services, CIS will provide world-class IT services that will boost the global acceptance of Philippine IT products and services," Sun Philippines president and managing director Cynthia Mamon said.

With the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States and continuing unrest in Central Asia, backing up office files and data has become priority issues for major companies worldwide.

BCRS solutions provide companies with copies of files critical to their operations. Even in the event of an accident, companies will still be able to continue going about their operations using back-up files stored somewhere other than their main offices.

Today's disaster recovery scenarios, however, require additional features, like offshore and multi-stage options. The Sun-CIS partnership is expected to provide a big opportunity for the Philippines to provide these services.

The team-up is also expected to reinforce investors' confidence in the Philippines.

Music allowed to sell 6% stake to Dutch firm

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange has allowed semiconductor firm Music Corp. to sell a 6-percent stake to Dutch company Merel Investments NV.

In a news statement yesterday, the stock exchange announced that it cleared the listing of 25 million new common shares that Music would sell to Merel.

These shares were supposed to cover the private placements of Music president and chief executive Michael Burton and another investor, Stichting Administratiekantoor Musseco, which would now be assigned to Merel.

The subscription was approved by the stock exchange at P1.82 a share.

Merel was supposed to subscribe to the 25 million new shares to be issued by Music out of its authorized but unissued capital stock, but it was unwilling to wait for two months, the period normally required to list new shares.

Eager to reel in Merel as an investor, Burton and other shareholders decided to sell from their existing equities 25 million shares to the Dutch company.

The transaction, in effect, has enabled Music to advance the net cash proceeds and use them to pay for the same number of new shares to be issued by Music now that the stock exchange has approved the new listing.

Music has 421.69 million outstanding shares, of which 33.73 percent are still available for foreign ownership.

The company is currently raising $6 million to beef up the treasury of its flagship unit, Music Semiconductors Inc., which is involved in the design and marketing of specialty devices for the networking industry.

The unit is in need of fresh funds to develop its newest microchip products.

Apart from issuing 25 million shares to a new group, the fresh capital build-up of Music involves the sale of an 18-percent stake in Music Semiconductors.

Music is likewise selling $1.7 million worth of shares in another unit Music Telecom Inc. with a right to repurchase the shares by November this year.

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News that makes a difference

Carlota approves plan to combine businesses

SHAREHOLDERS of Negros-based sugar miller Central Azucarera de la Carlota approved yesterday a corporate restructuring strategy to consolidate its sugar businesses with its parent company, Central Azucarera Don Pedro of Batangas.

Carlota and Don Pedro are both owned by the Roxas family of Batangas, one of the biggest private property developers in the province south of Metro Manila. Their combined output accounts for over 15 percent of the country's total raw sugar production.

In a news statement yesterday, Carlota chair Pedro Roxas said the reorganization would consolidate Don Pedro's sugar operations in Negros and its sugar manufacturing operations in Nasugbu, Batangas.

Carlota, meanwhile, would acquire Don Pedro's Batangas sugar business through a share-swap deal.

"The reorganization program will enable us to enhance the company's shareholder value and prime the consolidated sugar operations under Carlota for future growth," Roxas said. "Carlota can be transformed into the Don Pedro group's flagship corporation in sugar."

Under a single corporate structure, he said the consolidated sugar business would have "seamless management," which would enable Carlota to take full advantage of synergies in manufacturing, logistics, marketing, financial management, human resources and administration.

"The resulting Carlota will be a larger corporation with greater business focus and stronger financial position," he said.

As part of the consolidation, Don Pedro will spin off its Batangas sugar business, except its land assets, in favor of a new company, Phoenix Sugar Corp.

The share-swap deal will be implemented after the spin-off *Doris C. Dumlao*

DISCLOSURES

IMPERIAL Resources Inc. will increase its authorized capital stock from P4 billion to P10 billion, 70 percent of which shall be class "A" shares while the remaining 30 percent shall be class "B" shares.

* * *

PHILIPPINE Savings Bank has declared a P1-per-share cash dividend. The record date will be announced later.

* * *

ASIATRUST Bank has denied having any knowledge that can explain the 50-percent increase in its share price from P2.80 to P4.20 per share.

* * *

APPOINTED members of **Global Equities Inc.**'s executive committee were Nora Bitong, Edmundo Isidro, Florentino Herrera III, Oscar Lopez Dee and Romuald Dy-Tang.

* * *

INTERPORT Resources Corp.'s annual stockholders' meeting was adjourned due to a lack of quorum and moved to Dec. 10, 10 a.m., at the Metropolitan Club, Makati City.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of November 21, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	46.5	48	46.5	48	196,900
China Banking Corp.	500	500	500	500	1,840
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	17.75	18.5	17.75	18	360,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	166	167	162	164	213,540
Philippine National Bank	47	47.5	47	47.5	295,700
Phil. Savings Bank	27	29	27	29	1,400
Security Bank Corp. Secb	15.5	15.5	14.75	15.25	135,900
Union Bank of the Phil.	12.5	12.5	11.25	12	1,086,500
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1130	1135	1130	1135	720
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	24	24	24	24	5,700
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.3	0.32	0.3	0.32	630,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	10,000
Piltel	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	110,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	170,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	370	380	370	380	91,950
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.017	0.017	0.016	0.017	164,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	22	22	22	22	269,100
Manila Electric Co. B	26	27	26	26.5	1,709,600
Petron Corp.	1.16	1.28	1.16	1.26	14,959,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.32	1.44	1.32	1.38	6,625,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.245	0.245	0.24	0.24	1,500,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.23	0.23	0 23	0.23	150,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	620,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	1,300,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	23,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	11	11	10.75	11	1,103,500
Liberty Flour Mills Inc.	18	18	18	18	29,800
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	23.5	23.5	23.25	23.5	32,000
Rfm Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	152,000
San Miguel Corp. A	40.5	41	40.5	41	158,700
San Miguel Corp. B	51	52.5	51	51.5	138,300
Universal Robina Corp.	4.25	4.3	4.25	4.25	598,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.25	4.25	4.2	4.25	22,347,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.5	0.52	0.5	0.52	100,000
Apc Group Inc.	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	100,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	4,000,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.5	0.53	0.5	0.51	20,230,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	100,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	800,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	0.79	0.85	0.79	0.85	1,160,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	22.75	23.5	22.75	23.5	148,200
Ionics Inc.	6	6	5.7	5.7	131,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.58	0.59	0.57	0.59	2,660,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.25	3,190,000
Music Corporation	0.31	0.33	0.31	0.32	530,000
Solid Group, Inc.	0.33	0.38	0.33	0.33	890,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.23	380,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.8	0.8	0.79	0.79	300,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	9.8	9.8	9.7	9.8	120,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,120,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	110,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	10,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	24	24	24	24	1,080,000
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	555	560	555	555	230
Jollibee Warrants	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	20,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	20,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10	10	10	10	7,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10	10	10	10	25,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	2,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	7,000
Philweb.Com Inc. -Warrants	0.0046	0.005	0.0046	0.0048	149,000,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	8	8	8	8	10,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.55	4.7	4.55	4.7	24,563,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	200,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	70,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.26	1,000,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	320,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.3	1.44	1.3	1.44	12,618,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.5	5.7	5.5	5.6	11,627,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	5,000
Omico Corp.	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	37,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	200,000
OIL					
Pacifica	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	3,000,000

CURRENCIES

Nov. 21, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.131862	1.000000	52.1490
Japan	Yen	0.009238	0.008162	0.4256
United Kingdom	Pound	1.608489	1.421100	74.1089
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.145131	0.128223	6.6867
Switzerland	Franc	0.686601	0.606612	31.6342
Canada	Dollar	0.709810	0.627117	32.7035
Singapore	Dollar	0.616818	0.544959	28.4191
Australia	Dollar	0.587310	0.518888	27.0595
Bahrain	Dinar	3.002446	2.652661	138.3336
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.301830	0.266667	13.9064
Brunei	Dollar	0.613310	0.541859	28.2574
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000108	0.000095	0.0050
Thailand	Baht	0.025516	0.022543	1.1756
UAE	Dirham	0.308241	0.272331	14.2018
Korea	Won	0.000890	0.000786	0.0410
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.883500	46.0736
Germany	Mark	0.511291	0.451726	23.5571
France	Franc	0.152450	0.134689	7.0239
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.400915	20.9073
Austria	Schilling	0.072672	0.064206	3.3483
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.021901	1.1421
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000456	0.0238
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.148594	7.7490
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004407	0.2298
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.00531	0.2769
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.021901	1.1421
Ireland	Punt	1.269739	1.121814	58.5015

Ramcar . . .

(From page B1)

we only want to default once," the finance officer said.

Ramcar, controlled by the Agustines family, had declared a debt moratorium on Sept. 14. but the loans were covered by promissory notes that would only lapse in the next six months, thus making its loans performing at this time.

Montemayor said that among the pieces of property that it would offer to the banks include a 70-hectare industrial land in Bulacan worth about P2.1 billion and another 70-ha. property in Novaliches worth about P1 billion.

He said they would ask two appraisal firms accredited by the central bank to come up with a proper valuation of the assets. Of the company's total debts, only P1.58 billion was secured while the rest were given without collateral.

Ramcar officials said they were counting on the banks to help them, since if the company would be forced to liquidate its assets, its unsecured creditors would get nothing.

"We hope the banks would help us come up with a mutually beneficial arrangement because Ramcar does not have a business problem unlike others whose loans have defaulted. We have a financial problem that could be addressed," Montemayor said.

The company blamed the Asian crisis that drove interest charges close to 30 percent from a low of 11 percent. The official said Ramcar's debts stood at only P3 billion before the 1997 crisis and from that time to August this year, it had paid P5 billion in interest alone.

"It came to a point where we are borrowing just to service the interest," Montemayor said. In fact, he said the company had sold shares equivalent to two seats in Union Bank of the Philippines for P1.6 billion to service its obligations.

Ramcar admitted that it had also over-extended and engaged in non-core businesses, citing the P300-million investment in Philippine Air Lines that had gone sour.

The company also has investments in the Metro Rail Transit 3 project and in the local franchise of Kentucky Fried Chicken and Mr. Donut. It has a small stake in Philippine Seven Corp.

Of the 19 creditors, Bank of the Philippine Islands is Ramcar's biggest with an exposure of P2.2 billion, followed by Land Bank with P1 billion. Equitable PCI and Citibank have P600 million and P500 million.

Ramcar's other creditors include Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., Union Bank and United Coconut Planters Bank.

PUNITIVE IMPORT DUTIES

Tariff body to start hearings on cement

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE TARIFF Commission will begin next week its public hearings on a petition by the Philippine Cement Manufacturers Corp. (Philcemcor) to impose punitive duties and quota restrictions on cement imports.

The Tariff Commission will hold preliminary hearings on Nov. 27 to determine the schedule and procedure of public consultations, the nature of administrative and fact finding proceedings, non-applicability of the technical rules of procedures in the rules of court, the submission of parties' evidence and position papers.

The Department of Trade and Industry earlier endorsed Philcemcor's petition to the Tariff Commission after it had verified the surge in cement importation and reports that local players were hurt by the deluge of foreign brands in the local market. The DTI cited the sharp rise in imports, shrinking market share of local brands, drastic slowdown in production, and ballooning number of job cuts in imposing the provisional duty which should enable the local players to recover lost market share.

The DTI imposed a provisional duty of P20.60 for every 40-kilogram bag on all cement imports beginning this month. This will remain in effect in 200 days or until the Tariff Commission has made a final ruling. This is just half of what Philcemcor has been lobbying for since March last year, initially under the Anti-Dumping Law and later under the Safeguard Measures Act. The tariff was based on the landed cost of imports estimated at P103 per bag.

But a consumer group, the Confederation of Homeowners Association for Reforms in Governance and Environment, vowed to pursue its bid to block Philcemcor's petition in the public hearings.

CHARGE said it would submit further evidence that Philcemcor was working as a cartel and the imposition of a provisional duty would only curb imports, negate competition in the market and leave consumers at the mercy of manufacturers.

CHARGE claimed that the P125-per-bag price cap committed by Philcemcor was still way beyond the reach of consumers and it ensured cement makers more than 50-percent margin on their production cost of P60 to P80 per bag. CHARGE stressed that the only way to discourage imports from coming in was to lower prices in the country, which it said were among the highest in the region.

CHARGE and the Consumers Union of the Philippines had obtained a preliminary injunction from the Valenzuela Regional Trial Court stopping the DTI from proceeding with the review of Philcemcor's petition. But Philcemcor overturned this injunction by successfully getting a temporary restraining order from the Court of Appeals barring the Valenzuela RTC judge from acting further on the case.

Palace asked to OK negotiated contract for Napocor reinsurance

By Ronnel W. Domingo

AFTER two failed auctions, the Departments of Energy and Finance are pushing for a negotiated arrangement in farming out National Power Corp.'s insurance policy contract covering $6.5 billion worth of assets.

Energy Secretary Vicente Perez Jr. on Tuesday said that he and Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho have asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to authorize the committee tasked to oversee the renewal of Napocor's insurance policy to proceed with the negotiations.

Under the plan, however, the committee will negotiate only with the four groups that participated in last Monday's failed bidding. However, they will be asked to improve their offers.

Participants in last Monday's bidding were Arthur J. Gallagher, Heath Lambert, Marsh & Mclennan and Aon Energy.

Perez and Camacho, who are both with the President in her official working visit to the US, made the recommendation after conferring with Finance Undersecretary Antonio Bernardo, who led the committee in the absence of Camacho.

Camacho sits as chair of the committee while Perez is one of the two members representing Napocor. The two other members represent the Government Service Insurance System which is, by law, mandated to handle all the insurance requirements of government agencies and government-owned and -controlled corporations.

Bernardo earlier said that with the failure of the second bidding, the committee would seek alternative schemes to cover Napocor's insurance needs.

He said that if the committee would opt for a negotiated arrangement, things would be a lot easier.

"The law provides that government contracts may be secured through negotiations after two failed auctions," he said.

But Perez said they have submitted to the President a memorandum seeking her approval "to allow the committee to explore alternative ways securing insurance coverage for Napocor at the soonest possible time, including but not limited to entering into a negotiated contract or implementing a captive insurance program."

US firm to put up ship repair hub in Subic

AMERICAN services giant Kellog Brown & Root (KBR) is planning to pump in at least $100 million to build a world-class ship repair facility in the Subic Freeport Zone.

Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Felicito C. Payumo and KBR chief operating officer Thomas Crum signed the investment proposal in Washington during President Macapagal-Arroyo's US state visit.

Based on the American firm's investment plan, KBR will convert the former ship repair facilities of the US Navy into a modern commercial port facility as part of the SBMA's grand plan to develop the formal naval base into a regional transshipment hub. KBR will start the site evaluation and planning by the end of this month.

KBR will go into a renewable 25-year lease agreement with SBMA to enable the firm to use the facility for establishing and operating a maritime logistics and maintenance support facility.

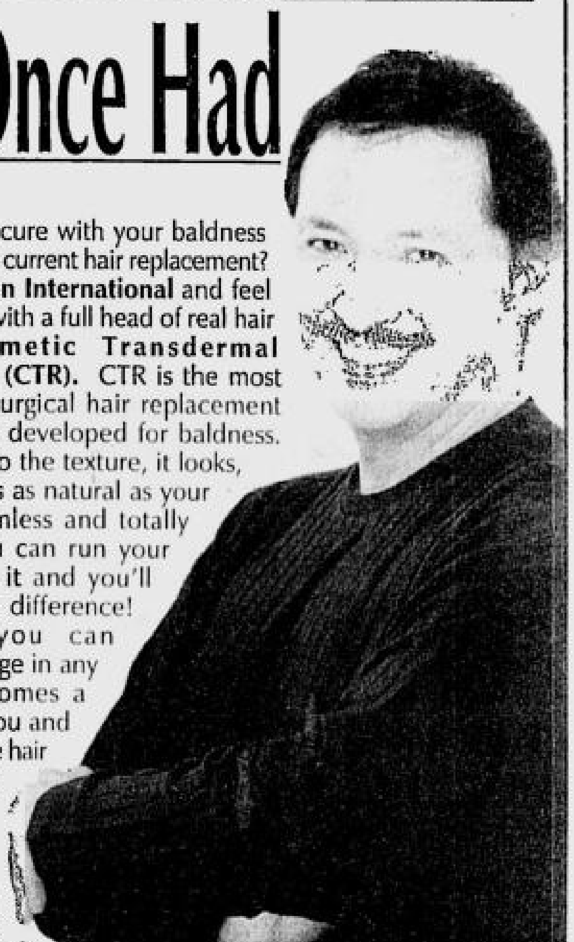
The company plans to provide repair and overhauling services for commercial vehicles; construction of luxury yachts; repair of maritime components and aviation ground support equipment; and repair of naval ships from the Philippines, the US and other countries.

KBR is the world's leading technology-based engineering, procurement, construction and maintenance (EPC/M) contractor and is part of the diversified Halliburton group. It has extensive capabilities in offshore gas production facilities; liquefied natural gas processing; olefin manufacturing technology; chemicals and fertilizer production technology; petroleum refining; forest products; mining and minerals; and maintenance.

It has been looking for business opportunities in the Philippines for the past years. The firm built the $100 million concrete gravity structure for the Malampaya gas project in the country.

Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

Recover The Hair You Once Had



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MON. - FRI. (8 AM - 7 PM) / SATURDAY (8 AM - 3 PM)

Sky . . .

(From page C1)

tiations with the cable operators. "I think Sky Vision and Home are under great pressure from the Philippine regulators to explain why they are raising prices while dropping channels."

SkyCable senior legal counsel Gerardo Ramiro, however, said that there was really no pressure from the government with respect to their announced rate increase. "Cable television rates are presently deregulated and thus are subject to market forces."

Chanco added that they have already satisfactorily explained in earlier meetings with the Department of Trade and Industry, the Senate and the National Telecommunications Commission their position as well as the reason for the loss of the Star TV channels.

"The only common sense that is now hopefully prevailing is coming from Star TV. They have now realized that they are shortchanging their advertisers by being absent in the 60 percent of the Philippine cable TV market that is represented by SkyCable and Home Cable," he said.

Chanco also said that they were sticking with their earlier statements that the program provider was doubling the programmers' fees for their programs and that it was not true that Star had even lowered their rates for the cable operators.

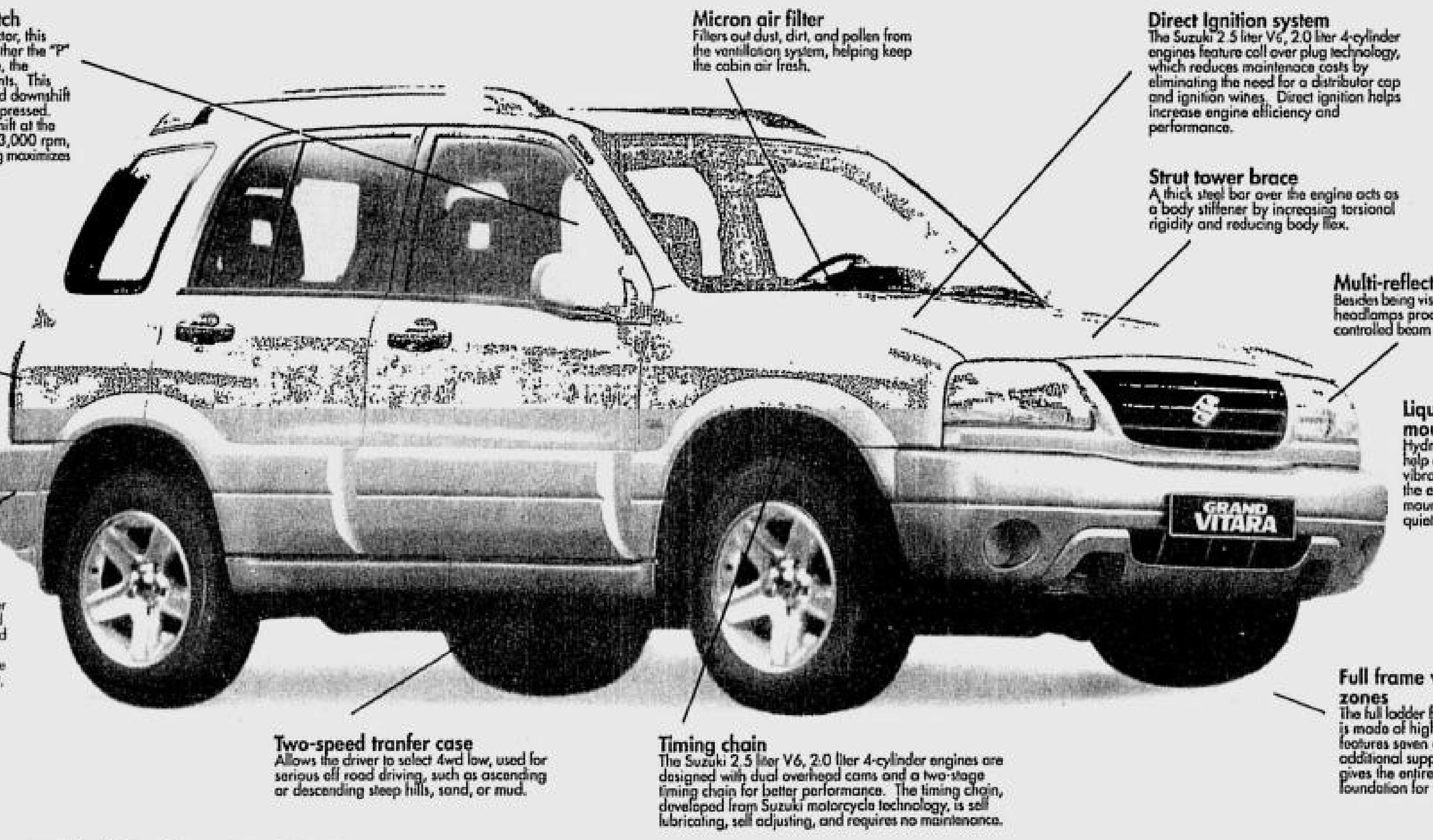
"It is not true that their offer was for only 80 percent of the fees in our previous contracts. They have definitely not lowered the rates in previous negotiations to offset the devaluation of the peso, as they are now claiming, or we wouldn't have this problem," Chanco said.

Pollard said, "Star has lowered its rates to off-set the devaluation of the peso over the last 18 months."

Ilagan said the settlement proposal had been on Tria's desk for a week now, but they have yet to get a response.

Tria said that SkyCable and Home Cable would probably be able to give their response to the program provider by next week.

GRAND FEATURES. GRAND CHOICES.*
GRAND DEAL.



Power mode selector switch
Located to the left of the gear selector, this switch allows the driver to shift in either the "P" or the "N" mode. In the "P" mode, the transmission will delay its shift points. This allows the vehicle to rev higher, and downshift quicker when the accelerator is depressed. Under "N", the transmission will shift at the regular shift points, usually about 3,000 rpm, depending on the model. This setting maximizes fuel economy.

Micron air filter
Filters out dust, dirt, and pollen from the ventilation system, helping keep the cabin air fresh.

Direct Ignition system
The Suzuki 2.5 liter V6, 2.0 liter 4-cylinder engines feature coil over plug technology, which reduces maintenace costs by eliminating the need for a distributor cap and ignition wires. Direct ignition helps increase engine efficiency and performance.

Strut tower brace
A thick steel bar over the engine acts as a body stiffener by increasing torsional rigidity and reducing body flex.

Shift-on-the fly four-wheel Drive
A shift-on-the-fly system with two speed transfer case allows drivers to shift between 2wd high and 4wd high at any speed up to 60 mph while travelling in a straight line. There is no need to stop, reverse, or lock hubs.

Multi-reflector headlamps
Besides being visually appealing, these headlamps produce a cleaner, more controlled beam for better night vision.

Liquid filled motor mounts
Hydraulically tuned to help cancel the noise and vibrations produced by the engine, these motor mounts help ensure a quieter cabin.

Chassis to body mounts.
Numerous energy absorbing rubber chassis to body mounts are placed on top of the ladder box frame, and below the body. They help keep road noise and vibration out of the passenger cabin, ensuring a quiet, smooth ride.

Full frame with crumple zones
The full ladder frame with boxed rails is made of high tensile steel, and features seven cross-members for additional support and rigidity. This gives the entire Vitara line a strong foundation for vehicle.

Two-speed tranfer case
Allows the driver to select 4wd low, used for serious off road driving, such as ascending or descending steep hills, sand, or mud.

Timing chain
The Suzuki 2.5 liter V6, 2.0 liter 4-cylinder engines are designed with dual overhead cams and a two-stage timing chain for better performance. The timing chain, developed from Suzuki motorcycle technology, is self lubricating, self adjusting, and requires no maintenance.

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Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION
Makati City

CATALINA M. ALONSO,
Petitioner,
- versus -
LUCILA ALONSO,
VICTORIA ROQUE and
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM,
Respondents.
x - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - x

SSC CASE NO. 7-14813-98

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION ENTERED

TO: VICTORIA ROQUE

GREETINGS:

Notice is hereby given that on the 24th day of October 2001, a **RESOLUTION**, consisting of twelve pages, was entered in the above-mentioned case, the dispositive portion of which reads as follows:

> "**WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED,** this Commission hereby finds, and so holds, that private respondent Lucila de Guzman-Alonso, was indeed married to deceased SSS member Alfonso Alonso on May 5, 1938, and as such, she is the legitimate wife and primary beneficiary of the said member entitled to the death benefits being contested.
>
> Accordingly, the SSS is hereby directed to give due course to the claim for SS death benefit and pay the private respondent the appropriate death benefit pension, subject to its existing rules and regulations, and to inform this Commission of its compliance herewith.
>
> SO ORDERED."

SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION

Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
City of Parañaque

INVITATION TO RE-BID

The City Government of Parañaque is inviting interested parties/accredited suppliers to participate and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

"PAMASKONG HANDOG PARA SA MAHIRAP"

2800 Bxs of Mayonnaise 220ml/24
2083 Bxs of Salad Macaroni 400g/30
1845 Bxs of Spaghetti Noodles 450g35
2800 Bxs of FruitCocktail 850g/24
1458 Bxs of Cheese 200g/48
2800 Bxs of Luncheon Meat 350g/24
2400 Bxs of Refill Coffee 100g/30
1250 Bxs of Powdered filled milk 180g/60
1548 Sacks of White Sugar (50 kls)
8000 Sacks Rice (50 kls)

All sealed bids will be received by the Committee on Awards on or before 10:00 a.m. and then publicly opened at the City Conference Room at exactly 2:00 p.m. on **December 14, 2001.**

Interested parties/accredited suppliers may secure the necessary bid documents and information from the Office of the City Mayor.

The City Government of Parañaque reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formality or defect contained therein and accept the lowest complying and reasonable bid that is most advantageous to the City Government.

(Sgd.) **JOEY P. MARQUEZ**
City Mayor

(PDI – Nov. 22, 24 & 26, 2001)

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

VISA ASSISTANCE 426-4492

AUCTION SALE

Victory Pawnshop at 45 Bonifacio Market EDSA Kaloocan City will hold an Auction Sale of all expired items on Dec. 6,2001 10:00 am. Vicente Zamora - Licensed Auctioneer

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE ESTATE OF THE LATE ELIGIO BAISA HAS BEEN EXTRAJUDICILALLY SETTLED AMONG HIS HEIRS AS PER DOC. NO. 63; PAGE NO. 14 BK; NO. XII; SERIES OF 2001 OF NOT. PUB. E. GENCIANA OF MANILA
PDI-Nov. 15, 22 & 29, 2001

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
BOARD OF INVESTMENTS
Industry and Investments Building
385 Gil J. Puyat Avenue
Makati City

Fax No. 8954024
Tel. Nos. 8976682 8901332

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the application of **HANOVER MANUFACTURING CORP.** with address at **Plaridel St., Alang-alang, Mandaue City** for registration with the Board of Investments under Book I of the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, otherwise known as E.O. 226, as amended by Republic Act 7918 as **New Export Producer of Baseball Caps, Sports Bags and Sports Wear (T-Shirts)** at a capacity of **38,400 Pieces Per Year** and with proposed plant site at **Plaridel St., Alang-alang, Mandaue City** has been officially accepted on **October 11, 2001** and is currently being processed.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file his/her objection, in writing and under oath, with the BOI within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) **CHITA O. ANGELES**
Director
Legal Services Department

(PDI – Nov. 22, 2001)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that an Extrajudicial Settlement of the Estate of Amando Tang with Deed of Absolute Sale has been executed by his heirs per Doc. No. 204; Page No. 42; Book No. 31;Series of 2001 before Notary Public Ezra M. Leano of the city of Manila (PDI -November 22, 29 & December 6, 2001)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Francisco Miranda and Cleofas N. Miranda has been extrajudicially settled among their heirs a per Doc. # 46; Page # II; Book # VI ; Series of 2001 before Notary Public C. Fortunato R. Balasbas of Manila (PDI - November 8, 15 & 22 ' 2001)

Notice that heirs of Jorge Santos Viola executed extrajudicial settlement of his estate dated November 8, 2001 per Doc. 322, Page 66, Book V, Series of 2001 acknowledged before Notary Public Gallardo S. Tongonan of Quezon City.
PDI-Nov. 15, 22 & 29, 2001

NOTICE OF LOSS

NOTICE is hereby given that the ff. certificates of stock issued by **Kimberly-Clark Philippines Inc.** in the name of **Victorina Veloso**, cert. of Stock Nos. 27, 53, 74, 92, 112, 126, 142, 154, 170, 186, 209, 223, 236 and 249 representing a total of 3,368 shares have been lost. If no contest received new certificates will be issued.
(PDI-Nov. 8, 15 & 22, 2001)

PUBLIC NOTICES

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO BLESSED MOTHER (NEVER KNOWN TO FAIL)

O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this necessity, Oh star of the sea help me and show me, herein you are my Mother Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech You from the bottom of My Heart to succor me in this necessity there are none that can withstand Your power. Oh show me herein You are Mother.

Oh Mary, conceived without sin. Pray for us who have recoursed to thee (3x).

Sweet Mother, I place this cause in Your hands (3x).

Thank you for Your mercy toward me and being mine.

Thank you Mama Mary for answering my prayers. Amen.

(This prayer must be said for three days and after three days, your request will be granted and the prayer must be published.)

NOVENA TO THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS AND SAINT JUDE

May the most Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised, blessed, loved, adored and glorified throughout the whole world now and forever. Amen.
Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Pray for us.
St. Jude, worker of miracles, helper for the helpless, pray for us.
Say nine times a day for nine days. Prayer will be answered by the eighth day, it has never failed.

Thank you very much, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Jude, for favor granted.

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Coronacion ("Neneng") Palmares Muyco

of Iloilo Medical Center, Bonifacio Drive, Iloilo City
and Passi City, Iloilo

Has peacefully joined her Creator on November 16, 2001 at the age of 74.

Her bereaved family and children—**Arturo Jr.** and **Ma. Consuelo, Therese Fileme** and **Mae-Mae, Paulette June** and **Jean Severin, Richard Allan** and **Grace**, and **Jo Mari Crisix** and **Claire**; grandchildren—**William Vincent, Katrina Marie, Alexie Corelle, Jean-Sebastian, Jaggie** and **Chubby**; and brothers, sisters-in-law, nephews and nieces request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at her residence, Iloilo Medical Center, Bonifacio Drive, Iloilo City and will be transferred to the Passi Parish Church Mortuary, Passi City, Iloilo this Saturday, November 24.

Interment will be on November 25, 2001 after the 1:00 PM Necrological Services.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

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†

Jesus said, "I am the Resurrection.
If anyone believes in Me,
even though he dies he will live,
and whoever lives and believes in Me
will never die."
John 11:25-26

We, the children **CORAZON, PABLO & RENA, GLORIE, EDMUND & FLOR, BONNIE & NELLIE,** and **EVANGELINE;** grandchildren **PAUL, GEMMA & GERRY, JANICE, HAZEL, CLARENCE & BABY ANN, DARYL, SHEILA, ARLES & ADILYN, EMMANUEL,** and **VITCHITA;** and great-grandchildren announce with joy and hope the triumphant crossing over from us to everlasting love of the Father of our dear

EMILIA LARANANG VILLANUEVA

of Tagudin, Ilocos Sur and Tabuk, Kalinga Province
on the 20th day of November 2001 at the age of 101.

Her mortal remains lie in state at the
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish (Claret Church)
Mahinhin corner Mayumi Street, UP Village
Diliman, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Tuesday morning, the 27th of November
at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

"Happy are those who have died in the Lord."

Our Dearly Beloved

VIGOR MA. F. MENDOZA

Peacefully joined his Creator
on November 20, 2001 at the age of 65.

His bereaved wife **Mercy de Dios**; loving children and in-laws **Rabbi** and **Vicky**; **Claire** and **Paul Garcia**; **Vigor II** and **Chic**; **Chingot, Riony, Reagan** and **Joanna**; grandchildren **Catrina, Levy, Louis, Mia Cara, Andrea** and **Leann**; relatives and friends, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Viewing Chapels of Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

Cremation will be on Sunday, November 25, 2001 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 2:30 p.m. Mass.

VELMA ROSARIO SABARRE JAYME CINCO

Peacefully joined her creator,
her parents and brother
on the 20th of November, 2001.

Velma is survived by her children: Carlo and Farah, Cirio, Cezar and Cecilia, Ma. Cecilia and Celeste; her brother and sisters: Lucia, Mario and Grace, Susan and Tim, Marian and Daria; her nephews and nieces: Alfonso and Jen, Adrian, Al Mari, Clarissa, Carmina, Catrina, Carissa, Patrick, Lucia Marie and Timothy; her beloved Manang Vicing and Manong Boy; and her grandchildren: Bea, Satchi and Aiko.

Pious readers are requested to pray
for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at the Sta.Ana
Parish Memorial Chapel.

Interment will be announced later.

"Silently, one by one in the infinite Meadows of heaven.
Blossom the lovely stars.
The Forget-me-nots of the angels."

MISS REMILY MAGNAYE CAPILI

*A solicitous **Sister**, an affectionate **Aunt**, an earnest **Educator**, a benevolent **Boss**, a workaholic **Worker**, a faithful **Friend**, and a humane **Human Being***

has passed from pain to peace, from sorrow to joy, and from death to eternal life. The countless people whose lives she has positively touched - brothers and sisters **ANTONIO** (†) and **FELY, SABAS** and **LINDA, NELIA** and **ERNESTO** (†), **ARMANDO** and **LILY, ZENAIDA** (†) and **JOE** (†), **LEVI** and **DOMING, FERNANDO** (†) and **LOLIT, ESTER, ARCELI** and **MAR**; nephews, nieces, grandchildren and other relatives; management and staff of **L.C. BATTERY** and **PARTS SUPPLY INC.**; colleagues and former students at the Far Eastern University; and friends who love her dearly grieve over their loss but at the same time rejoice at their loved one's resurrection.

Her body lies in state at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Church (Claret Church Basement) Mahinhin Street, U.P. Teachers Village, Quezon City and will be interred at the family plot in Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Quezon City on November 23, 2001 after the 1:00 p.m. Mass.

"From darkness let the light shine!" Genesis 1:3

Our Dearly Beloved

ABRAHAM YUSON ROSAL

Peacefully joined our Lord on November 20, 2001
at the age of 73.

His loving wife **Carmen Villar**; children **Maritess** and **Garth** (†), **Rory, Abe Jr.** and **Maricar, Pem** and **Carie**; grandchildren **Tommy, Ina, Luis, Niño** and **Matthew**; parents **Eleuterio Sr.** and **Faustina** (†); brothers and sisters **Oyet, Tetin** and **Ote, Nonong** and **Lina, Nena** and **Onlo** (†), **Bino** and **Chita, Fos** and **Salve** (†), **On** and **Myra, Fe, Boots, Didi, Lei** and **Ouen**; relatives and friends, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal rest of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapel, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Funeral Mass shall be on November 23, 2001 at 2:00 p.m. followed by Cremation Services at 4:00 p.m. at the Loyola Crematorium.

Our Lord took her home secure in the knowledge
that a heavenly mansion awaited her.
(John 14:2)

NAOMI G. HOLLMANN

January 6, 1922 - November 20, 2001

Her children **Chiqui & Prandy, Pinky, Mimi** and family praise and thank the Lord for her life.

Memorial Services will be held at
6:30 p.m., Thursday, November 22nd at
Greenhills Christian Fellowship,
Ruby and Garnet Roads, Ortigas Center.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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British think tank sees slow Philippine growth until 2003

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILIPPINE growth will slow down starting this year to 2003, as whatever momentum the country had has been dashed by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, according to Business Monitor International, a UK-based economic research team.

In a recent study, BMI said it expected the Philippines' gross domestic product—a measure of all services provided and products sold in the country—to grow by only 2 percent, lower than the government's estimate of 3.3 to 3.8 percent.

Next year, GDP growth would still fall below the government's target to 3.2 percent. The government expects growth to hit 4 to 4.5 percent in 2002.

BMI placed Philippine GDP growth to reach only 4 percent.

The domestic economy grew by 3.3 percent in the first six months of the year but was expected to slacken in the second half.

"The economy will begin to gather momentum next year, but mainly in the second half, as external demand picks up. We are also hopeful that the beleaguered electronics sector will begin to recover by then," BMI said.

The Macapagal administration is expecting growth to slacken in the second half, as export earnings contract by 15 percent from an 8.7-percent growth last year due to an economic slowdown in the United States and Japan, the country's major export markets.

The export sector is expected to recover next year to post flat growth.

BMI said exports this year only contributed 0.3 percent to GDP, dragging growth by 3 percent in the second quarter.

"There is little prospect of a more robust performance from the export sector going forward, and the Philippines is heavily exposed to slower growth in the US and Japan and to the downturn in the world electronics cycle," BMI said.

The British think tank believes the Macapagal administration will slightly overshoot its budget deficit target by P4 billion, or 4.3 percent of GDP, this year to P149 billion against a target of P145 billion.

It said the government would continue to narrowly miss its deficit target next year to P132 billion, or 3.5 percent of GDP, compared to its target of P130 billion.

In 2003, according to BMI, the budget deficit will go down to P87 billion, or 2.1 percent of GDP.

BMI said foreign direct investments would reach only $1.7 billion this year but would likely strengthen to $1.9 billion next year and to $2.2 billion in 2003.

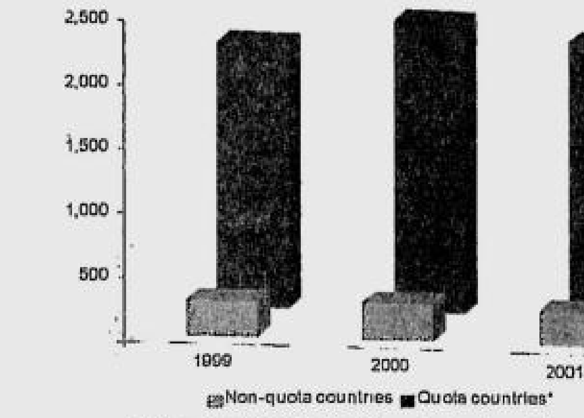
"The Philippines has failed to attract large inflow of foreign direct investment largely due to the country's failing infrastructure. This is an area in which it has traditionally lagged behind its neighbors," it said.

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Garments & textile export

(mid-October 1999 to 2001, in US$ million)



*Quota countries: United States, Canada & countries in the European Economic Community

Source: Garments & Textile Export Board

DUE to the global economic slowdown, exports of garments and textile, the country's second biggest dollar earner, dropped 5.8 percent to $2.41 billion as of mid-October 2001 compared to the year-ago level. Year 2000 was considered a good year for the industry as it posted a 9.9 percent growth in exports. Figures this year, when compared to 1999, showed a modest growth of 3.5 percent.

Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

RP, Indonesia sign energy dev't deal

By Ronnel W. Domingo

ENERGY Secretary Vicente Perez Jr. said on Tuesday the government signed early this month a memorandum of understanding with Indonesia to cooperate on energy-related projects.

Perez told reporters that the agreement, which involved the Department of Energy and Indonesia's Ministry of Energy Mineral Resources, included efforts to:

- look into the possibility of the Philippines deriving coal from Indonesia on a long-term but below-market-price basis,
- look into the possibility of the Philippines importing natural gas from Indonesia to supplement the Malampaya gas reserve, and,
- allow the Philippines, through the Philippine National Oil Co., to help develop the geothermal potential of Indonesia.

"Further discussions between PNOC-Energy Development Corp. and Indonesia's Directorate General of Geology have resulted in an offer by Minister Turmono of geothermal project contracts to PNOC-EDC," Perez said.

The Philippines is the second largest producer of geothermal energy in the world after the United States.

Also, Perez added that the PNOC signed an agreement with its counterpart—Perusahaan Pertambangan Minyak & Gas Bumi Negara—to study the possibility of a natural gas supply deal.

"Based on the DoE's projections of electricity demand, we would need within five to seven years additional gas beyond what Malampaya can offer," he said.

DOE data showed that the country would need almost 10,000 megawatts of additional electricity in the next 10 years.

By next year, natural gas from Malampaya would be running three power plants with a total generating capacity of 2,700 mw.

Further, Perez said if any gas supply deals would be made, this could be part of the Trans-Asean Gas Pipeline.

He explained that if a gas supply deal with Indonesia would mean a pipeline link, that link would form one component of the TAGP.

Earlier, the Asean Council on Petroleum recently identified seven potential gas pipeline interconnections that would link natural gas producers and buyers within the region, including a link between Indonesia all the way to Batangas.

GOINGS-ON

Cebu Pacific first int'l flight

CEBU Pacific Air starts today its twice-daily flights to Hong Kong.

"We're raring to go," Cebu Pacific president and chief executive Lance Gokongwei said. "The present decline of the world economy and the airline industry, in particular, has brought in several inquiries as to whether we will pursue our international expansion or not. We have always been positive in our response."

Cebu Pacific will operate the Hong Kong service with a newly acquired, newly refurbished Stage III DC9 plane. In mid-December, a Boeing 757, leased specifically for international service, will take over the mission.

"I'm sure our passengers will be pleasantly surprised as they try us out for their Hong Kong trip," Gokongwei said. "No matter what the aircraft type. Cebu Pacific is committed to giving passengers a pleasurable trip, with its special brand of warm, caring service."

BPI signs MOA on merger

FOLLOWING the approval of its board of directors on Sept. 20, the Bank of the Philippines signed a memorandum of agreement with Mitsui Marine & Fire Insurance in Japan on Oct. 12 covering the merger of FGU Insurance Corp. and FEB Mitsui Marine.

The merged entity will be known as BPI/MS Insurance Corp. and will be owned by BPI and Mitsui Marine & Fire Insurance on a 50-49 arrangement.

Worldcom meet held

THE WORLDCOM Group Inc., the world's most extensive networking organization of independently owned public relations consultancy firms, recently held its Asia-Pacific regional meeting at The Regent Kuala Lumpur.

Organized this year by TQPR Malaysia, the meeting was presided over by Philippine representative Edith Sola, current Worldcom Asia-Pacific chair.

Worldcom chief operating officer Daisy Guthin briefed the delegates on "Quality," the management standards that are being implemented globally by Worldcom.

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Unilever group sells cleaning firm to Johnson Wax for $1.6B

NEW YORK—Anglo-Dutch consumer products group Unilever said Tuesday that it had agreed to sell its industrial cleaning business, DiverseyLever, to Johnson Wax in a deal worth about $1.6 billion.

Johnson Wax Professional would pay $1 billion cash and provide a loan note of $279 million. It would also take a one-third share of equity in the combined business, worth an estimated $300 million.

The agreement provided for Unilever's exit from the combined business after five years.

Johnson Wax Professional would take management control of the combined business and a two-thirds stake, including 5 percent of equity put aside for employee share option schemes.

The combined business would have annual sales of $2.6 billion.

"This is an excellent strategic move for Unilever," Unilever co-chairs Antony Burgmans and Niall FitzGerald said in a joint statement.

The sale was in line with the company's aim of focusing money and people on a reduced number of leading brands, they said.

"We are delighted these two businesses are coming together. They complement each other's strengths extremely well."

Unilever is to transfer its entire DiverseyLever professional cleaning activities into the new company.

This deal involved some 11,000 employees worldwide and 49 manufacturing sites including 2,500 employees in North America and nine plants.

In the few locations where DiverseyLever shares factories with other Unilever units, site-sharing or co-packing arrangements will be established, Unilever said.

DiverseyLever provides cleaning and hygiene services to professional customers particularly in food preparation, lodging and laundry sectors. Its sales for the 12 months to June 2001 were $1.48 billion. *AFP*

Gulf must prepare for post-oil era

PARIS—The oil-rich Gulf Arab states must prepare for the post-oil era by diversifying their economies and making structural adjustments, a Credit Agricole study said Tuesday.

The anticipated depletion of the Gulf states' oil reserves makes it essential to introduce economic activities that will create jobs, said an analyst with the French bank.

The region's high population growth rate "means that the current setup ensuring security and stability could reach its limits," according to the study, published by CA Perspectives.

It said Bahrain, Oman and Qatar—whose reserves could dry up in 15 years at the current rate of production—had taken the lead in diversifying their economies, along with the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

In contrast, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, which sit on huge oil reserves, are lagging behind, even though it is in Saudi Arabia that the demographic problem is most acute, the study noted.

Thus Qatar and Oman have been trying to develop their significant gas wealth, estimated at 7.4 percent and 1.5 percent of world reserves, respectively. *AFP*

US attacks, economic downturn muster trade support–Supachai

BANGKOK - Incoming World Trade Organization (WTO) head Supachai Panitchpakdi said the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States had galvanized support for the world economy.

Addressing members of the International Chamber of Commerce late Tuesday, Supachai said the attacks and ensuing economic downturn had "drawn people together" and facilitated the WTO talks at Doha, Qatar, earlier this month.

"The terrorist attacks of Sept. 11 have helped to force people together to form a coalition against anything that terrorism could destroy anything that could keep the world economy moving along," he said.

"The Doha meeting was a blessing in disguise because there's been ... a strong motivating force that drew people together."

Supachai, who becomes WTO director general in September 2002, said the international community had "averted disaster" by reaching agreements at Doha and showing it could work together.

"We have averted the worst kind of disaster at Doha," he said. "If we'd fail to agree, the spread of recession might have been worse. We should not lose hope that global solutions still exist."

He said the Doha meeting, which led to an agreement by more than 140 countries to push for lower trade barriers and boosted the WTO's credibility, should "give a positive tone to trade next year."

The collapse of WTO talks in Seattle had provided important lessons for the trade group, Supachai added, saying the organization must avoid being too ambitious in its agenda.

The former member of the Thai parliament lent his support to several global trade lobbies such as the enforcement of intellectual property rights and the protection of geographical names as raised by France for spirits and wine.

He added Thailand may make use of rules for geographical names to protect Thai jasmine rice amid concerns over a US rice breeder's attempts to develop a strain of the rice that could be grown in other countries.

As head of the WTO until August 2005, Supachai said he wanted to wrap up all tabled agreements during his tenure, adding all member-countries must be included.

Developing countries such as Thailand emerged from the Doha conference with several important gains such as the phasing out of agriculture subsidies and greater freedom to override drug patents to protect public health. *AFP*

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HK faces 'rough patch'

HONG KONG—Hong Kong Chief Secretary Donald Tsang said Wednesday that the territory is preparing for a "very rough" time in the year ahead.

"The situation is quite clear for all to see. We are preparing for a very rough patch, not only in Hong Kong, the whole of East Asia and the rest of the world for that matter," Tsang told reporters in London.

"As a consequence of what has happened (regarding) a slowdown of the US economy and what has happened on Sept. 11, we can expect a pretty rough time in the year ahead," he said.

Tsang said Hong Kong Financial Secretary Antony Leung had already stated a further adjustment to the administrative region's one-percent gross domestic product growth projection for 2001.

On Monday, the government said unemployment was expected to rise further after it climbed to 5.5 percent in the three months to October as the economic slowdown deepened. *AFP*

Korean economy to grow by 1.5%

SEOUL—The South Korean economy is expected to grow by 1.5 percent in the third quarter and double to 3 percent in the final three months, a top economic official said Wednesday.

Chief presidential advisor Lee Ki Ho indicated there would be a faster recovery in gross domestic product (GDP) than expected but that strong measures would still be needed.

"Many people had forecast the third-quarter growth rate would be lower than one percent but the third quarter growth rate is now estimated at 1.5 percent," Lee said.

The fourth-quarter growth rate is expected to hit 3 percent and next year's growth will be somewhere between 3.0 and 3.5 percent, Lee told a business meeting.

He said South Korea's economy needs to grow at least 5 percent every year to keep its unemployment rate at 3 percent. *AFP*

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2001 SUBARU FORESTER

Run, Forester, Run

BY RAYMOND B. TRIBDINO
AND TESSA R. SALAZAR

2001 FORESTER'S Impreza running gear makes for go-go performance on- and off-road.

DESIGNED around the impressive Impreza's platform, Subaru's Forester is a cut above other sport-utility vehicles because of its rallye-derived running gear and go-go performance both on- and off-road.

If looks and styling are the main motivation for buying an SUV, then the Forester may not be qualified. Its rather bland, boxy, no-nonsense styling does not gel well with the "I-like-it-cool," image-conscious crowd, who'd most likely choose the outlandish RAV-4; or with the laid-back and conservative business-type who spells SUV with the letters C-R-V.

But if the main criterion in selecting a sport-ute is gutsy performance and a robust disposition, then the Forester should be the top choice.

It may not be a hardcore off-roader, but that really isn't much of an issue. Ninety-nine percent of owners will drive it on asphalt or concrete 99 percent of the time anyway. And the confusion of it being a wagon, car or sport-ute settles once you take it out of the garage. It'll perform on-road duties spectacularly and off-road duties satisfactorily.

So, for those who think driving over slippery shampooed tarpaulin and crossing over logs and similar obstacles is a Sunday drive, this may be the perfect vehicle.

Log jams and soapy roads

Raymond: So Georges, what can you say about the log and shampoo test?

Georges Ramirez (*multiawarded rallye driver, two-time Subic Grand Prix Driver of the Year, test driver at the first Forester Challenge in Fort Bonifacio*): The Forester quickly found the traction in the slippery shampooed surface because of the all-time, all-wheel drive. Since there was no need to transfer power between wheels, even the log crossing was not difficult. Traction is so good, I ended up burning holes through the tarpaulin.

Tessa: Makes the hair fluffy too ha?

Georges: I only had the Forester on "D" (drive). And it went. And went fast.

Raymond: The Forester makes very good use of its 2.5-liter engine, but don't you think a manual gearbox would be great? With power in all four wheels and a drivetrain copied from the Impreza rallye car, you can surely do a lot of fancy driving with it.

Tessa: Forgive my ignorance, but what would three consecutive World Rallye Championships, the Hulman 24-hour challenge with a record setting 180.082 km/hr average speed do to the Forester?

Raymond: What it does is make the Forester a smart piece of machinery. Take the transmission for instance, it's rather uncomplicated but makes the most of the 165 horses under the hood. It knows when to hold the gears when descending a slope and almost always chooses the right cog when going uphill.

Tessa: Was that the reason crossing logs and similar obstacles was easy?

Raymond: Yes. None of that wimpy and finicky power transfer systems in this SUV. And it's rugged too, feeling so solid, so well-built. Humps, dips, bumps and ruts are breakfast for the Forester.

Georges: Not only that, a high ground clearance and car-like feel make it easy to drive, the seat position is close to the floor providing that all-important "seat-of-the-pants" driving experience.

Car-like charm, SUV smarts

Tessa: One of the endearing qualities of the Forester is its car-like demeanor. Inside you get a comparatively lower roofline and low floor; even with its generous ground clearance. It seems like a boxier Legacy Wagon and is more compact than other SUVs. Or is crammed the better word?

Georges: I agree. It doesn't have a "trucky" feel to it. It is more like driving a slightly raised station wagon. In fact, it is really more like driving a rallye car.

Tessa: I can't figure out why it is so slow out of first gear.

Louie Ramirez (*Subic Production Car Race champion, test driver at the first Forester Challenge in Fort Bonifacio, race organizer*): It's an automatic so there is really a lag.

Raymond: Power is split 50/50 between the front and rear wheels. Acceleration is very strong up to 100 kph. But after 100, it takes a while for the speedometer needle to complete its arc. At about 120 kph, the tachometer climbs to nearly 3,000 rpm.

Tessa: There is very little vibration. Does the horizontally opposed pistons—used in light airplanes, Volkswagens and Porsches—minimize vibration?

Raymond: In this case, yes.

Louie: Because of all-time, all-wheel drive, it is an idiot-proof vehicle. A really laid-back highway cruiser and for me it's the best SUV. Performance-wise, only the RAV-4 comes close to it.

Georges: It is very Subaru. Really like an Impreza. There is always an ample amount of power but since it drives like a car you can never be clumsy with it.

Ample off-road prowess

Tessa: If it can cross logs like it does, does it mean it is a good off-roader?

Raymond: Technically yes, but I don't think it is meant for the hardcore stuff, like the ones done using 4x4s with solid axles and differentials.

Louie: It rides like a car, making it very nimble and maneuverable. Even on the highway it doesn't exhibit excessive body lean or that wallowy feel of taller SUVs.

Raymond: Steering is really decent. Driving around the gravel-littered roads of Real in Quezon was a breeze. With four-wheel traction, it minces the bends well and really does those four-wheel drifts with a lot of drama.

Tessa: The ride feels so stable even in sharp curves. So that's how having the all-wheel drive feels when negotiating a turn, it seems so precise.

Raymond: It has a viscous coupling center differential to split the power from the horizontally opposed flat engine. Let's see, that means great handling, gobs of power and plenty of traction.

Tess S. (INQUIRER editorial assistant): It feels so stable, even under sudden braking and acceleration.

Tintin A. (INQUIRER editorial assistant): The Forester has a great reputation abroad, I drove the Forester in the US recently. It was great! Felt really safe. *Bilib ang* uncle *ko sa* Forester.

Hybrid interior

Tessa: The front seats are very friendly. Perfect for Asians, with comfy armrests like the big SUVs. I love the leather Momo steering wheel.

Raymond: It's pretty basic inside. But what else do you need when everything needed is under the hood and chassis?

Louie: The pillar-less doors are beautiful and the front seats are great! The overall package isn't as sophisticated as other offerings. The vertical chrome grille is well, not as imposing. But the alloy wheels are great!

Tessa: Outside it isn't much of a head turner. But I find it elegant, affluent. And with a price tag of about P1.3 million, it should at least look stylish. I like the pillar-less windows too! Innovative! But is it safe? Hmmm…the Forester is supposed to be the Sports Safety Vehicle.

Raymond: Doesn't look as muscular as other SUVs but it has one of the highest safety ratings. Its innovative unibody construction (Subaru calls it Ring Frame) exceeds the US crash safety standards with protection in frontal, lateral, offset and rear impacts. There are dual airbags but I am not sure about ABS, though the discs provide a lot of stopping power, despite the soggy brake pedal feel.

Georges: I like the inside because it is compact and not cluttered.

Raymond: Check out that cool rear center seatbelt that comes out of the headliner. That's an emergency locking retractor with a pretty queer anchor point.

Tessa: The fabrics are funky and the plastics are of very high quality. Overall, a great feel inside. Keep the overdrive button on for the best results. Hey! That picture is wrong! Foresters we have here don't have sunroofs.

Raymond: We're just giving GM an idea.

Subaru pioneered the concept of a hybrid passenger car/sport-utility vehicle. The Forester can rightfully claim to be a "best-of-both-worlds" vehicle, successfully combining the ride comfort, safety and fuel efficiency of a sedan with the rugged versatility of an SUV without the massive bulk and mediocre handling.

Raters give it a thumbs-up with **8 out of 10** total points. The high scores are dragged down by the rather benign styling and thirst for more interior space. Top points go to technology and overall performance, unmatched by most SUVs locally available.

(Many thanks to racing brothers Georges and Louie Ramirez for their comments. When can we see the new Subic track, guys?)

RPM and your tires

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

RPM in this case does not refer to the revolutions per minute on your car's tachometer, but to Raised Pavement Markers, the generic name for cat's eyes or road reflectors. The connection between RPMs and your tires is obvious, as was pointed out in a previous column (PDI, Oct. 4, 2001). RPMs with sharp-angled, near-perpendicular metal surfaces are offensive to tires. Regular driving over RPMs, especially at speeds higher than 20 kilometers per hour, is bad for your tires and can actually damage them after a period of time.

The risk is greater if your daily route includes streets where the spikes of broken RPMs are jutting out, ready to pierce your tires. Example: the left-turn lane of northbound Ortigas Avenue, at the Wilson Street—Greenhills Shopping Center traffic light. Last Saturday, when I was about to turn left on Wilson from Ortigas, I saw the spikes again. Ortigas Avenue is by no means the only "RPM-spiked" street in Metro Manila, there are many others. Readers are encouraged to e-mail the names of streets and locations of RPM spikes they have sighted. The Department of Public Works and Highways (if it's a national road) and local government units (if it's a provincial, city or municipal road) are reportedly reluctant to remove RPM spikes because doing so would entail tearing up the road and in the process causing another traffic jam.

You may wonder how a metal RPM can break down and leave behind its spike or stud, exposed and jutting out of the road surface. A knowledgeable reader explained it to me. The locally made RPM used by the DPWH is based on the "Cat's Eye" design that was invented during World War II by the Americans—that's how vintage our national standard for RPMs is. The Philippine-standard metal marker is made up of three parts: a housing, a reflective face and an anchor or spike.

The housing, made of high-end aluminum, has openings and edges where water, ultraviolet rays and dust can seep through. These external elements cause the marker to deteriorate faster. A reflective face (a reflective sticker or reflective dots) is attached to two sides of the housing and a metal spike or stud is welded to the center of the housing underneath as an anchor.

To install the metal marker, a hole is drilled in the road, epoxy is injected into the hole and the marker's spike/anchor is placed in the hole. However, strong and continuous impact from tires on the surface, combined with water seepage, dust and ultraviolet penetration underneath the housing, eventually wears out the metal marker. Since the housing and the reflective face are separate structures, they can break and fall apart. The reflective sticker peels off or the reflective dots fall off. In a deteriorated condition, the housing can be easily dislodged from the road surface, leaving behind its anchor/spike, which was merely welded to it.

Spiked metal RPMs cannot only damage your tires, drilling rows of holes required for their installation creates hairline cracks in the road that ultimately lead to potholes. A superior, tire-friendly, longer-lasting RPM with more reflective power is available for P750 to P800 each, imported from Australia. In contrast to the standard metal marker's 60- to 70-degree angle that is offensive to tires, it has a lower height and smooth, 30-degree sloping surface that is less abrasive to tires and less jolting to car occupants. Furthermore, installing this RPM is easier and less damaging to infrastructure as it has no anchor/spike that has to be embedded in the road. Since it is guaranteed to last many years longer and its reflectivity outperforms the cheaper RPMs, the price difference is soon recovered in terms of value for money many times over.

But many DPWH contractors and local government officials prefer the locally made ones costing less than P200 each for understandable reasons. Given, say, a contract price of P2,000 per RPM installed, the profit margin of the cheaper brand is greater. And, because the cheaper RPMs are poorly designed, they come off right away, giving the contractor or LGU officials justification to schedule the same RPM-installation project again and again, thereby providing themselves a nice, steady flow of income over the years. So what if the safety of the motoring public is jeopardized?

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: If at first you don't succeed, don't sky dive.

* * *

E-mail comments to aida_sevilla@pacific.net.ph

THE PAINTLESS dent removal process restores damaged metal panels to its initial surface level while retaining the original paint, and without the long wait or risks of off-color results common in repainting cars on a per panel basis.

Paintless dent removal available at CarSavers

CARSAVERS has a new, faster and lower-priced method of removing small and annoying dings and dents from a vehicle. This Philippine franchisee of Ziebart TidyCar also has complete auto and body repair services.

The old, traditional time-consuming yet expensive remedy for even such small and superficial, yet irritating imperfections are now therefore unnecessary with the availability of CarSavers' new paintless dent removal (PDR) process, a fast and low-cost solution to remove small dents or dimples on your car.

The PDR "massages out" dents—a process achieved through "reverse panel access."

CarSavers' PDR-certified technicians expertly remove dents without the need for tinsmithing and repainting by first gaining access to the inside skin of the affected panel, then meticulously and skillfully "massaging back" the damaged area until the dent disappears and the panel is restored to its original condition.

Besides the skill of the PDR technicians (acquired through US-certified training), the key to its effectiveness is the equipment. The metal tools used to "massage out" dents are specially designed forged rods of a combination high carbon and stainless steel so that, while thin and slim, they are tough and tensile.

The PDR jobs can cost from only P1,500 which is significantly lower than the old time consuming practice of tinsmithing, sanding, filling and repainting—and without the long wait and risk of off-color results common in repainting damaged sections. Best of all, depending on the size and location of a dent, the paintless dent removal process can take just a short while—about 15 minutes. It's that much faster than the usual repainting jobs.

The PDR is just one of the many innovative services of CarSavers that it offers in its locations in Makati, Manila, Pasig and Cebu. For inquiries, call up CarSavers at 889-4144 or log on at www. carsavers.com.

NEW VOLVO V70 CROSS COUNTRY

The car that is a concept in itself

"THE NEW Volvo V70 Cross Country has been developed in its own project team," says Silvia Gullsdorf, technical project manager.

Says Gullsdorf: "From the start, we endeavored to make it as good as possible, and so it has many unique solutions. Even the dimensions are different. Compared with the standard V70, the Cross Country is broader, longer, higher and has a wider track width at the front. "We are also introducing a unique, three-section rear seat that makes the car even more versatile, regardless of whether one uses it for leisure equipment or to give the children more space to play, she adds.

THE NEW Volvo V70 Cross Country is broader, larger and higher.

The best of two worlds

The new Volvo V70 Cross Country is a robust four-wheel drive vehicle with a ground clearance of a full 200 mm—60 mm more than the standard V70. However, it is still no "off-road vehicle." It combines the best of the increasingly popular sport utility vehicles (SUV) with the safety, comfort and roadholding of a car.

The Volvo V70 Cross Country offers its driver a good measure of driving pleasure and advanced handling. This is primarily attributable to the well-balanced chassis and the unique AWD all wheel drive, TRACS on all wheels and large, sturdy tires (215/65/16") which make the car easy to drive and safe on all possible road surfaces.

Another important consideration is the environment. SUVs are often heavy, with high fuel consumption. The Volvo V70 XC weighs only 50 kg more than the standard V70 AWD and with its newly developed 2.4-liter light-pressure turbo engine of 200 bhp, it has fuel consumption well below that of the average SUV.

Flexibility

The new Volvo V70 Cross Country targets buyers who give priority to an active lifestyle and who often use their car as a tool to achieve this. It, therefore, includes a number of details that make it even more practical and flexible. One good example is the new, unique three-section rear seat, which splits three ways, 40-20-40. This means, for example, that the center seat can be folded down to accommodate bulky luggage without interfering with the four most comfortable seats in the car. In turn, this makes it easier to carry expensive and theft-prone leisure equipment such as skis inside the car instead of on the roof. One can also use the rear center seat space to fit an electric cooler box (extra equipment) or a play table to make long journeys more enjoyable for children.

The backrest can also be locked into either of two positions, for maximum comfort or a little extra luggage space. Another considerate feature is the handle between the front seats to hold on to on rough roads.

The new Volvo V70 XC will be sold in the Philippines with a five-cylinder 2.4-liter, 200 bhp light-pressure turbo engine by Viking Cars Inc., the exclusive authorized dealer of Volvo passenger cars in the Philippines. Viking Cars has its showroom at 2272 Chino Roces Ave. (formerly Pasong Tamo Extension), Makati City.

Sponsors clipping the apex much too soon

(From page B9)

crisis. This holds true even for smaller events and local racing.

No real threat

The threat of some major car manufacturers forming their own Formula One style has also been downplayed after Paolo Cantrella, Fiat boss and president of the European Car Manufacturer's Association (Acea) failed to galvanize plans with other automakers.

The pivotal reason in the creation of the alternate series is still the broadcast rights currently owned by German media group Kirch. The group has recently taken up a majority share in the SLEC, the company controlling F1's commercial interests, which is in turn, owned by F1 ringmaster Bernie Ecclestone.

"Our goal is to promote the interest of the sport, to make sure that races are made freely available to the broadest possible public worldwide, and that the income generated benefits mainly those who invested in order to render the competition possible, i.e. the manufacturers and the independent teams," said Cantrella.

So far Ford, DaimlerChrysler, Renault, Fiat and BMW are all backing the development while Honda and Toyota are also being invited into the alternate series. Since the initial negotiations, little progress seems to have been made.

But F1 experts say that this move will fizzle out owing to the fact that DaimlerChrysler and Fiat are the only two "new" brands in racing.

The rest of the car makers invited to the alternate series are already either running in Formula One as constructor-manufacturers or engine suppliers.

Internal threat great

The real threat to the sport may come from inside, pundits say.

Ecclestone, F1's big boss has many companies that control everything from licensing to television rights to merchandise. These companies are allegedly also controlling who and what businesses can make money out of the lucrative F1 circus.

Only recently, the Internet F1 site F1-Live.com (www.f1-live.com) filed an anti-trust suit against Ecclestone. Unfair business practices supposedly reduced the site's revenues through interference and hampered business by inhibiting the sites' relationship with teams and by cutting off ties its suppliers.

Ecclestone's Formula One Licensing BV has filed what F1-Live.com considers as a meritless US$400 million per year trademark court case that puts excessive pressure on the small Internet company with only seven full-time employees.

It is this control that the alternate racing series wants to counter, and is considered by many as a great internal threat.

Formula One will go on

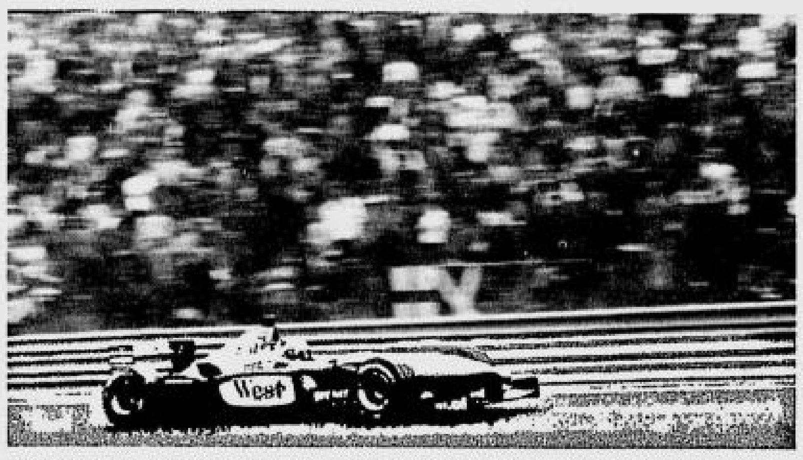
Clearly the problem is the escalating costs of competing in Formula One which is creating difficulties for the less successful and more poorly supported teams.

While it is true that many teams are facing financial difficulties at present they have also been coping with such problems for some time. But with a large following of over 1 billion people during each race day, F1 is still considered a huge marketing base for products and services. This huge population of fans alone will assure the continuance of the sport for years to come.

FORMULA ONE SURVIVAL

Sponsors clipping the apex much too soon

BY RAYMOND B. TRIBDINO



FORMULA ONE. Will sponsors' logos soon disappear from cars?

DESPITE the threat from some of the world's major car manufacturers to form their own Formula One style series and the impendng withdrawal of many team and event sponsors, F1 will continue through the 2002 season.

Most teams and bosses have come up with these doom and gloom forecasts because of the difficulty of creating an alternative event and the availability of alternative sponsors if needed.

"Formula One has shown itself to be very resilient in times of economic difficulties because it is truly global and can extract sponsorship from whichever industry sectors are the most robust," said Mark Gallagher, Jordan Team's marketing head responding to an e-mail interview with the INQUIRER. "The economic slowdown may be difficult and particularly threatening to the sport, but it will go on."

Continued sponsorships

Major global brands like Compaq, Mild Seven and Sun Microsystems have started to tighten their belts, but have not withdrawn from the sport.

The drop in spending for F1 marketing efforts has been mainly attributed to financial reengineering. Most companies supporting F1 are redirecting spending toward activities that would keep them afloat.

So far only two sponsors have made their pullout official. Several others have signalled their intentions to cease sponsorship at least temporarily.

Big brands like Marlboro, Lucky Strike, Hewlett-Packard, Compaq and Sun have long-term partnerships with various teams. For the time being, none of these companies has plans of pulling out despite the withdrawal of Nortel and Marconi, secondary sponsors of Williams and Benetton, respectively.

However, F1 analysts debunk the withdrawal saying their contribution is "insignificant." Clearly, this pullout is a result of the downturn in their particular sectors over the past year.

Tougher constructors

The reemergence of the car manufacturer/constructor has assured the continuance of F1.

Just three years ago, only Ferrari, Mercedes and Renault were considered real works teams, with the larger portions of team budgets coming from the parent companies rather than sponsors. BMW, in partnership with Williams, built a winning team and has successfully captured the third slot in the 2001 constructor's championship.

For 2002, seven-manufacturer-constructors will battle for dominance. Jaguar is the only other full-support team. Renault will be making a comeback as Toyota makes a debut. Honda will continue to support both the BAR-Honda, which is officially the Honda F1 team, and Jordan-Honda. BMW continues on with Williams.

Arrows, Sauber, Prost GP and the bottom-feeding Minardi will continue on next season despite low budgets and unrenewed sponsor contracts.

Extremely resilient

To find out just how resilient Formula One is, one only has to reminisce the events of Desert Storm and the Gulf War.

During the recession of this period in the early 1990s, corporate sponsors also cut back on spending.

Formula One was able to demonstrate its ability to cope with money problems, initially by tapping smaller sponsors, then by creating alliances that spread the costs of running both the event and teams.

In the upcoming season there will be only 12 teams, six of which are already assured of spending power courtesy of their rich parents. These top six teams have the ability to operate without sponsor capital if needed.

Moreover, major global brands may curtail spending, but they cannot afford to cancel investing on marketing and selling their wares.

But Formula One teams, tracks and managers must consider cost reduction for sponsors. F1 could be pricing itself out of the motor sports sponsorship market, and if this continues may cause companies to channel ad and marketing expenditures somewhere else.

Reevaluating its costs to sponsors is crucial in the light of the current economic crisis. This holds true even for smaller events and local racing.

No real threat

The threat of some major car

CLIPPING/p.B8

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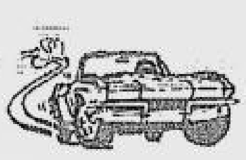

Al S. Mendoza

THE BEAUTY about being present in the biennial Tokyo Motor Show is that you will be able to see firsthand the advancement in automobile technology. As I keep telling Danny Isla of Toyota Motor Philippines when we were there, "You need at least a week to really savor everything that is on display here. And the savoring will only include the newest inventions in car manufacturing."

Of the more than 30 car companies that exhibited their latest products, you cannot seem to finish studying each and every car among the almost 100 automobiles displayed in Makuhari Messe. Wow, each vehicle was a wonder by itself.

One Toyota vehicle that struck me in the Motor Show was the Estima Hybrid minivan. It doesn't look flashy; it has the basic features of the Toyota Previa—but only externally, of course. It's the inside that takes the cake.

Introduced only in June 2001 to the Japanese market, the Toyota Estima Hybrid minivan is the world's first hybrid minivan and the world's first mass-produced gasoline/electric four-wheel-drive hybrid vehicle. Toyota's newly developed THS-C hybrid system combines a 2.4-liter high-efficiency gasoline engine, front motor and Super CVT transmission.

The Estima Hybrid also features advanced electronic "brake by wire" technology, an engineering paradigm for autos of the future. Its electronically controlled braking system provides outstanding handling and driving stability using independent as well as liner hydraulic controls for each wheel. The rear transaxle combines the motor and differential gear in a single unit, making it a more lightweight, compact structure while at the same time eliminating the need for a driveshaft and keeping overall weight increase to a minimum.

The electrical system generates up to 1,500 watts of auxiliary 100-volt AC—making it a mobile power plant ready for anything from a laptop to a microwave oven. In fact, one version of the vehicle is outfitted for networked office mobility.

Isn't it cute?

The car can be used as both a home and an office. You heat your sandwich or pasta in the microwave while you pound away at your laptop while inside your Estima Hybrid minivan.

Neat.

And, by the way, I was wrong when I said the new Toyota ES (Echo Spirit) runs at 2.7 liters of gasoline per 50 kilometers. It actually runs 100 kilometers per 2.7 liters of gasoline!

Who can top that?

* * *

'Tis the season to be really, really late.

That's the cute pitch of Ford in its latest campaign ad to "buy now pay later."

Buy the Ford Lynx Ghia AT for P765,000, with a down payment of P175,000 and then start your 36-month installment (P20,500/month) or 48-month installment (16,750) 90 days after. That's next year.

Now if you want the Ford Ranger XLT 4x4 (P980,000) with a down payment of P200,000, start your installment also 90 days after—which is next year, too.

Offer ends on Dec. 31.

* * *

QUOTE ME. Quality is always expensive. But in the long run, it becomes cheaper than the one you buy at bargain prices.

Shell giving away ₱10-M worth of prizes

THIS Christmas season, Pilipinas Shell gives the Filipino family the chance to win thousands of gifts. Through its Family Gift Overload promo, Shell is giving away gifts that include Sony home theater systems, trips to Bangkok and Hong Kong and personal computer sets,

For every P300 worth of single or accumulated purchase of fuels, lubricants and Select products in any Shell station nationwide, motorists can earn one coupon for a chance to win any of the 2,250 preliminary and 145 major gift prizes worth over P10 million.

"This is Shell's unique way of sharing the blessings of Christmas with Filipino families that have been loyal to us through the years," said Pilipinas Shell gasoline brand manager Amon Chiong.

Customers have the choice to drop their coupons in any of three drop boxes labeled "Daddy," "Mommy" and "Kids." Each box has its own corresponding gift prizes to be won.

The grand prizes for dads are five Sony home theater systems, 10 Pioneer car audio systems, 10 Nokia 8890 mobile phones, 10 Sony 21-inch color TV sets and 10 digital cameras.

Grand prizes for moms are five trips to Bangkok and five trips to Hong Kong plus $1,000 pocket money, 10 two-door National refrigerators, 10 automatic washers and dryers, 10 P20,000 worth of SM gift certificates and 10 La Germania gas ranges.

For kids, the grand prizes are 10 computer sets with printers, 10 Sony play stations, 10 P20,000-worth of Toy Kingdom gift certificates, 10 mountain bikes, 10 Nike apparel sets and 10 Sony discman.

All participating Shell outlets will each have winners of the preliminary prizes of Philips portable CD components, Imarflex turbo broilers and Canon personal cameras.

The promo runs Jan. 15 next year. Preliminary gift prizes will be drawn on Dec. 10 while the grand draw will be on Jan. 30 next year.

November is Clean Air Month

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Toyota launches new promo

TOYOTA Motor Philippines Corp. is providing its customers an early Christmas treat this month with its newest promo featuring the hottest selling car in the market today—the Altis Perks and Privileges promo.

All Toyota Corolla Altis buyers from Nov. 11 to Dec. 22 will automatically receive free perks and privileges like spa and health club memberships, electronic gadgets, digital devices, a special accident insurance account and genuine Toyota parts, accessories and services.

Each Corolla Altis buyer will receive a Toyota Value Card worth P15,000, which he can opt to use for any of the several perks and privileges included in the promo. One of the many choices includes services and membership from one of the newest and most popular health clubs in the city today, The Spa. Located at the swanky RCBC Plaza in Makati City, it offers Altis buyers a wide array of their body pampering services.

Corolla Altis buyers can also choose to use their Toyota Value Cards to purchase the newest electronic gadgets and accessories in the market from any Abenson and Electroworld branches nationwide.

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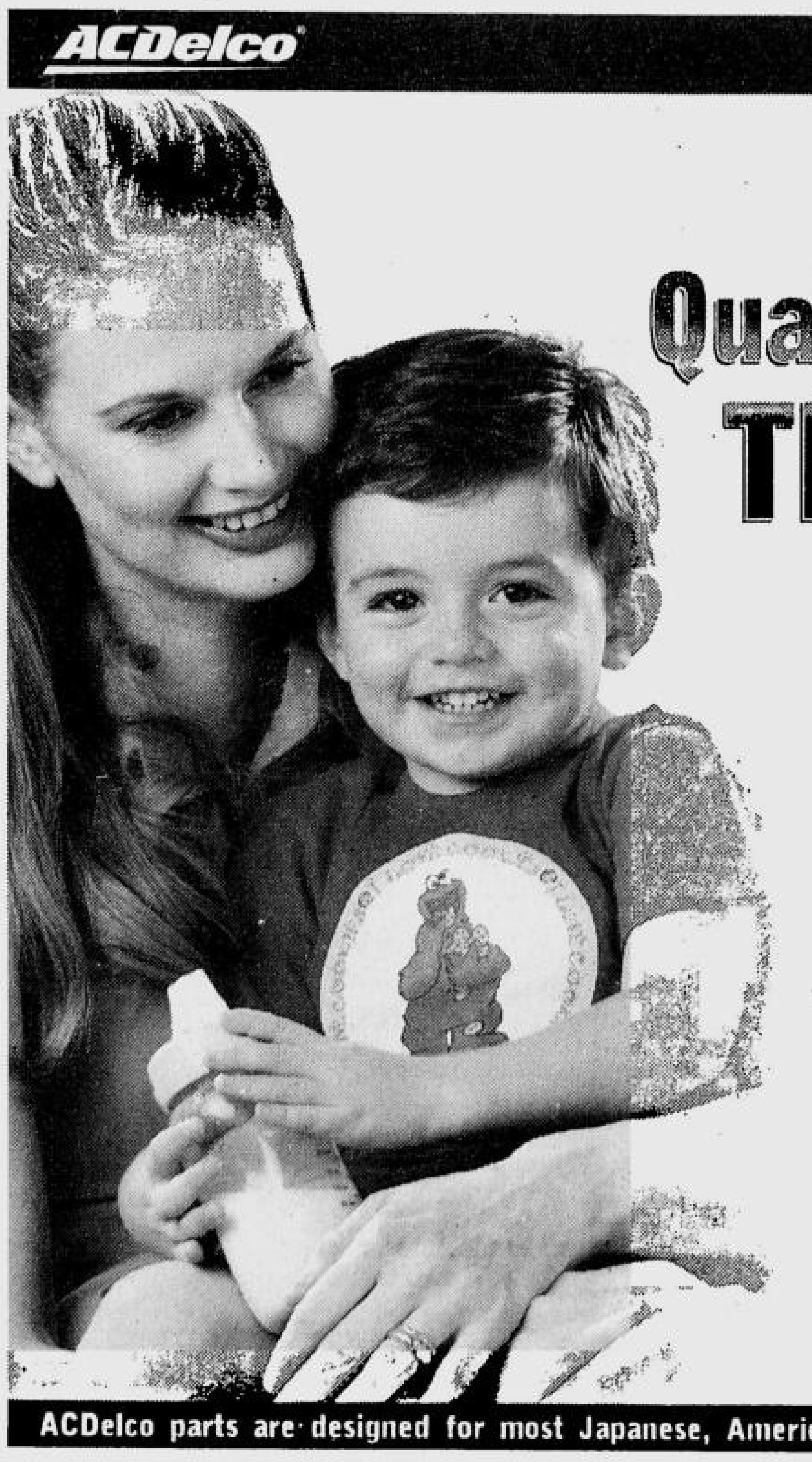

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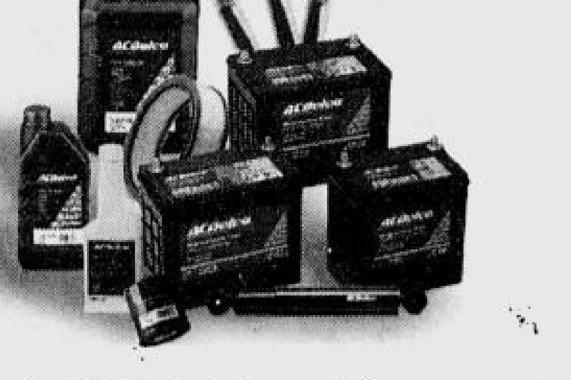

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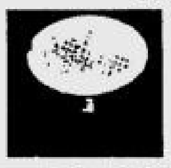

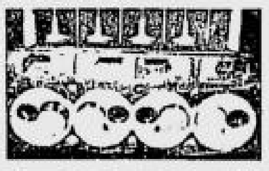

MOTORING

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

GM hopes to sell 30 Ventures a month

BY AIDA SEVILLA-MENDOZA

GENERAL Motors Automobiles Philippines Inc. launched the Chevrolet Venture minivan last week with target sales of 30 to 60 units a month.

A CBU (completely built unit) from GM's assembly plant in Shanghai, the Venture can seat 10 adults and has dual sliding doors and power locks for easy access from either side of the vehicle. A wide rear liftgate door provides quick access to the cargo area, which is increased when the rear seats are folded.

The Venture's 2.98-liter V6 four-stroke single fuel injection engine produces 171 Hp/5,200 rpm max and a high torque rating of 250/4,400 lbs. ft/rpm. GM claims that even with a full load, the Venture, which comes only with a 4-speed automatic transmission, can accelerate to 100 km/h in 16 seconds. GM Automobiles Philippines president Harold Koh said that the Venture averages 7.4 liters of unleaded gasoline per 100 kilometers.

The Venture's suspension system consists of MacPherson coil spring constant rate independent suspension in front and coil springs with variable rate semi-independent at the rear. The rack and pinion power-assisted steering and the height-adjustable steering column allow better driving control and maneuverability, including a turning radius of 6.0 meters.

Driver and passenger airbags, 4-wheel ABS-assist disc brakes, side and rear window electric defoggers, front fog lamps, center high-mounted stop lamp, express-down power windows, 15-inch aluminum wheels and keyless entry with theft deterrent system are standard. So are air-conditioning controls front and rear, overhead console, a rear-visible clock and a 6-speaker car audio system with equalizer, front-loading CD stereo and AM/FM radio with music search. Cabin space security is ensured by a complex safety cage structure and lateral steel door beams. GM claims that the Venture's double-sided, galvanized steel body panels make it weather- and rust-proofed.

With a suggested retail price of P1.150 million, the Chevrolet Venture is seen to compete directly with the Toyota Hi-Ace, Mitsubishi Space Gear, Kia Carnival and Hyundai Starex as a more upscale, more fully loaded family minivan.

New minivan fit for Filipino families

BY CHARLES E. BUBAN

THERE'S nothing mini about this new minivan from Chevrolet. With increased seating capacity and enough spare cargo room, the Chevrolet Venture is General Motors' answer to minivan lovers who are looking for luxurious comfort and bigger space.

Expect family members and even teammates to always wonder how they all got in your minivan. Chevrolet Venture's three rows of plump cushioned seats have enough legroom to accommodate 10 passengers comfortably. For those who opt for a bigger cargo space, the rear seats can be easily folded to accommodate more space for gears and luggage.

With its dual sliding doors and power locks, the Chevrolet Venture makes boarding and alighting much easier from either side of the vehicle. This exceptional accessibility is paired with a wide rear liftgate door that provides ready access to the cargo area or when folding the rear seats.

"In keeping with GM's vision of providing the utmost comfort and safe driving experience, the addition of the Chevrolet Venture brings families closer together by offering them with the ideal minivan," said Harold Koh, president and general manager of General Motors Automobiles Philippines during the Venture's recent launch at the Manila Polo Club in Makati.

Designed for the long haul

Traveling aboard the Chevrolet Venture makes it a total and unforgettable driving experience for the whole family. Under the hood of this new minivan is a high performance V6 4-stroke single fuel injection engine. This 2.98-liter power plant can churn out a maximum horsepower of 171 at 5,200 rpm that even with a full load, this unleaded-gasoline-powered minivan can still accelerate to its maximum speed in 16 seconds. Furthermore, with torque that can reach 250 lbs.ft. per 4,400 rpm, the Chevrolet Venture can tow your other equipment with less effort.

Driving is never this fun as Chevrolet designed the Venture dashboard to be conveniently accessible to both driver and passengers. Air-conditioning controls can be adjusted from the front and from the rear while the overhead console contains two nifty bins for sunglasses and a rear-visible clock. High-fidelity music is provided with the minivan's 6-speaker stereo system complete with equalizer, front-loading CD stereo and AM/FM radio with music search.

Travel safely

Families can be assured that the Chevrolet Venture can overcome even adverse driving conditions with its side and rear window electric defoggers, front fog lamps and center high-mounted stop lamp. The minivan's 4-wheel ABS and MacPherson coil spring independent suspension system ensures sure footing during sharp cornering or unexpected stops.

A complex safety cage structure and lateral steel beam protect passengers inside the van. Coupled with seatbelts and dual airbags for drivers and front passengers, and an exclusive PASS Key Theft Deterrent System, the minivan ensures ultimate protection against accidents.

Said Kohl: "The Chevrolet Venture is a sure investment. It comes in automatic and is available in a wide selection of colors to cater to the different tastes of our customers. Much more, you can have this family minivan at a premium price of P1.150 million."

Indeed, if you want to carry cargo and people with real ease in an everyday vehicle, a minivan is tough to beat.

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Shell Helix. Available in three cool variants, Super, Plus and Ultra.

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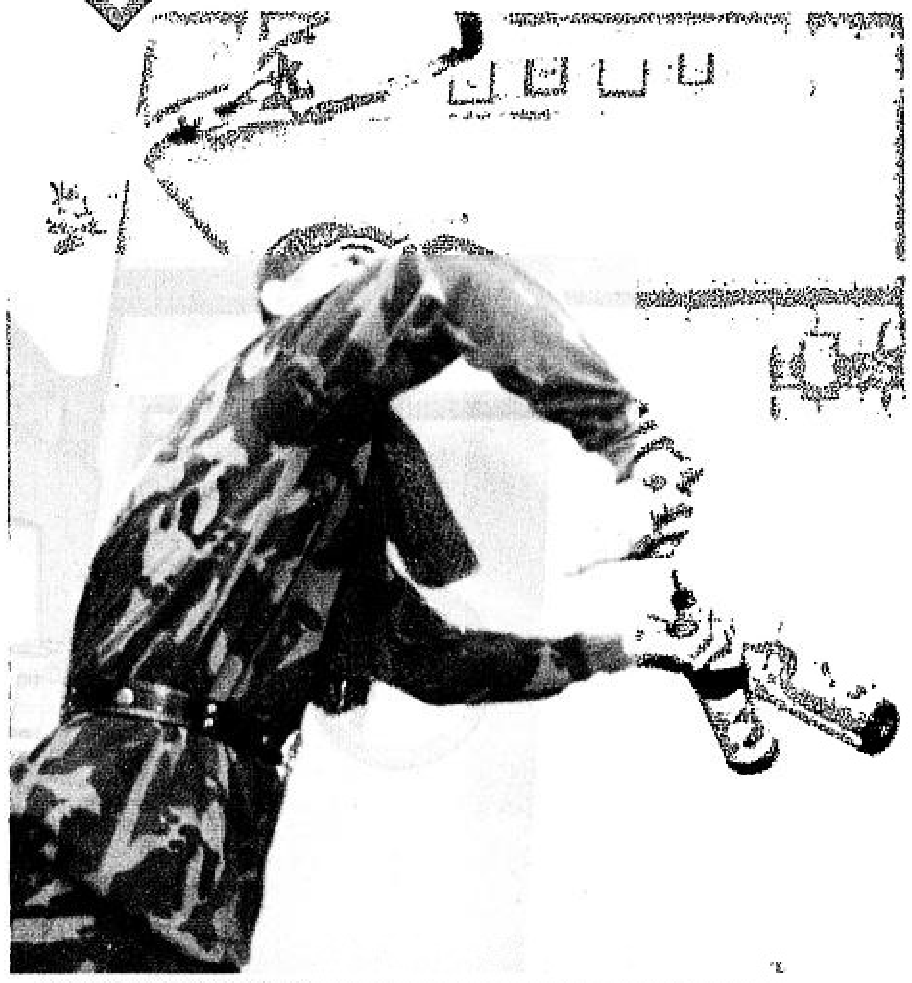
CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

Tostitos

4 Araw na lang wag! na ang magaling magpresyo sa ABC
the Price is right

ON THE WARPATH. Jay Rufino juggles several bottles of Arctic vodka.

RUFINO displays sleight-of-hand tricks...


... BEFORE TOSSING another bottle and catching it behind him.

Bartending with a twist and lots of flair

BY ALEX Y. VERGARA
PHOTOS BY VAL HANDUMON

Jay Rufino of Pier 1 is representing the country to the 'flairtending' competitions in Brazil

CLAD in a pair of camouflage pants and a tunic cinched at the waist with, of all accessories, a tacky black cowboy belt, Cielito "Jay" Rufino was all set for battle. To complete the look, he wrapped his head with an improvised *tubao* in mesh army green. He shunned the de rigueur combat boots in favor of high-heeled cowboy togs.

Instead of a gun, however, Rufino flipped a half-filled vodka bottle with a nozzle before tossing it in the air and into the mouth of a stainless steel holster, er, shaker resting in his other hand. He later juggled several bottles before shooting their contents one after the other into a tall glass. Through all these, Rufino managed to smile, wink, dance and coax his audience to show some spirit.

"Music is very important," he says, minutes before going into his routine. Rufino's choice? An infectious techno beat with unintelligible lyrics about—what else—war!

If plans went according to schedule, Rufino is now seeing action in sultry Brazil and not in war-torn Afghanistan. The diminutive bartender is the country's official representative to the ongoing "flairtending" tilt hosted by the International Bartenders Association in Rio de Janeiro. Rufino will vie for the top spot with 45 other top bartenders the world over.

"I thought of putting together this costume myself," says Rufino in Taglish. "It's quite unique and timely because of the situation we're now in."

Spunky performer

Rufino, a bartender from Pier I at The Fort, bested colleagues from various parts of the country in a local flairtending championship organized by the Philippine Bartenders' League. Nordique Marketing, exclusive distributors of Arctic Flavored Vodka and Disaronmo Originale, sponsored the local tilt as well as Rufino's trip to Rio.

The mild-mannered bartender, although no Tom Cruise look-alike, is a frisky performer with enough spunk to hold the crowd's attention. If he's to get anywhere, though, he should by now be used to the attendant glare. During a recent exhibition at Pier I, Rufino had to repeat his act because the flashbulbs from the photographers' cameras were said to have distracted him seconds into his routine. Now, if only a group of international judges would buy that excuse.

Call it bartending with a twist. Flairtending contestants will be judged primarily for their technical flair and the routine's degree of difficulty. There's little room for spillage, and deductions are in order for missed cues and, of course, broken bottles. As a showman, he's expected to put on an entertaining and engaging show.

What about the drink? Surprisingly, the product won't rate as much as how it will be made. The tilt is divided into two: the international cocktail event where drinks are judged and the grand event where contestants' flairtending skills are put under the spotlight.

"Contestants aren't allowed to flip bottles [of drinks] they won't use in their concoctions," says Mutley Matilla, president of PBL. We failed to taste Rufino's yellow-green concoction, but one woman who beat us to it gave the thumbs-up sign soon after imbibing "This is Life."

Practice makes perfect

"I've been practicing for seven hours a day for several months now," says Rufino, who's been a bartender the past seven years. He joined Pier 1 in 1997. "That means exercising every day and also saying no to alcohol and women."

PBL and Pier 1 officials have high hopes for Rufino. After all, a Filipino has clinched the top prize at the tilt's second edition last year. Alas, the native of Bulacan, now a bartender based in Tasmania, represented Australia.

"He's young, he's flexible and he's very confident," says Franco Limjuco, marketing director of Nordique Marketing Inc., referring to Rufino.

"I'm not at all nervous," says Rufino. "After all, I've already proven myself. What frightens me is the prospect of flying for the first time." With such a commanding outfit, perhaps he need not worry.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

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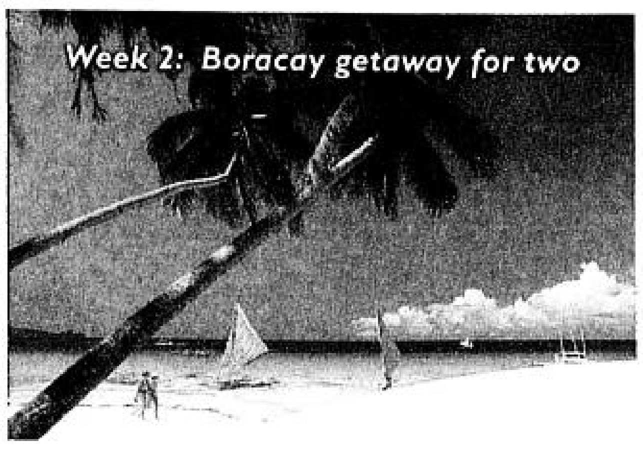
TUNE IN...TE

Week 1: Davao adventure for two


Week 2: Boracay getaway for two

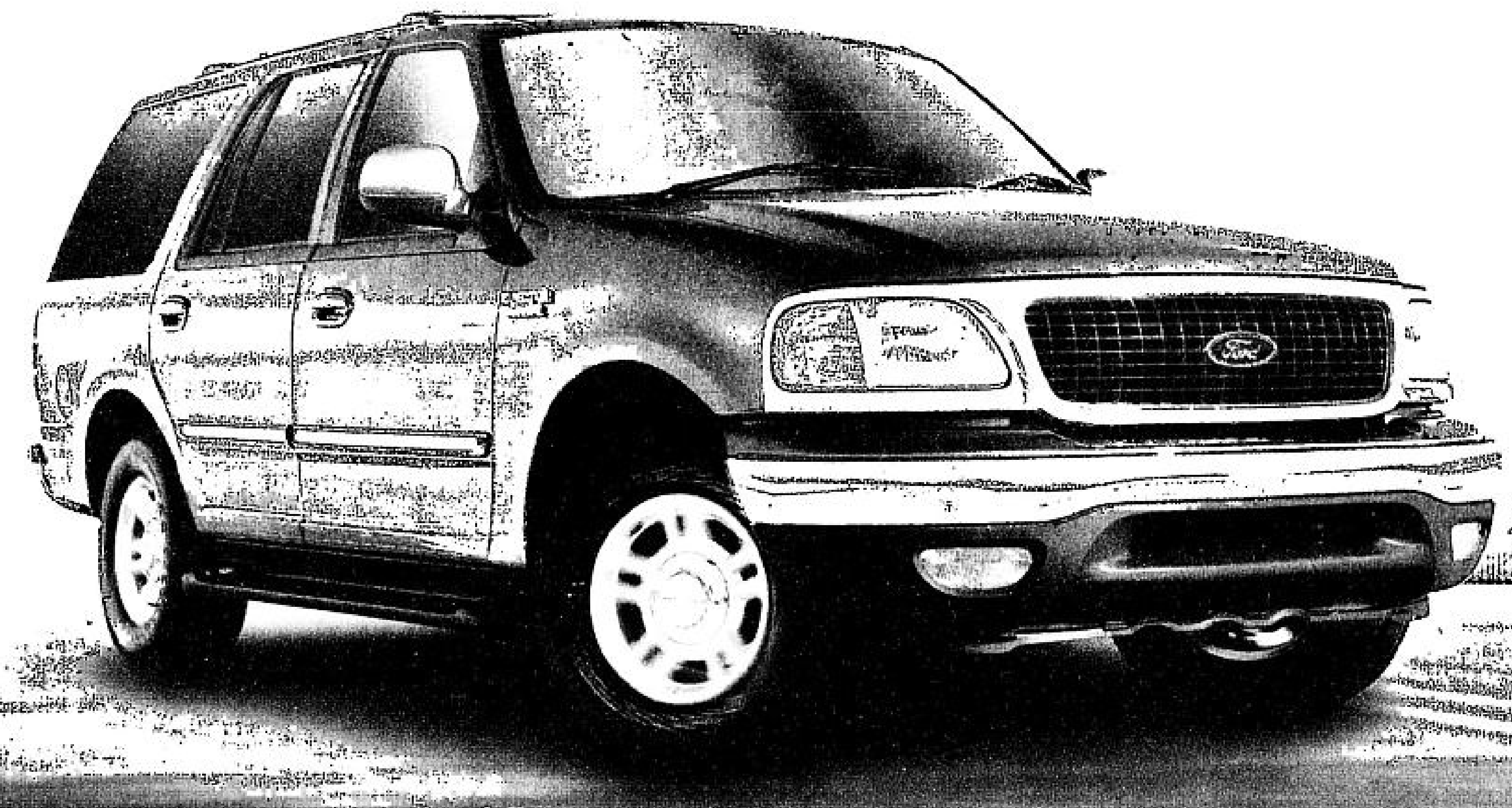
Gl

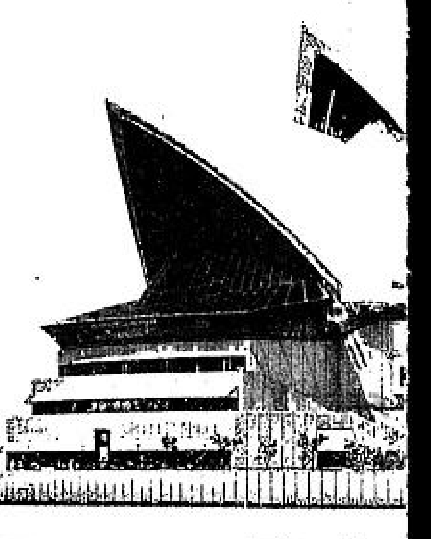
Text Away t

Win in the weekly draw!

Watch celebr

Tonight a


Ford Expedition for family outings!*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celebr8

A Globe Get-Together

Open to all Globe Handyphone Plan and Prepaid subscribers

Here's how to join:

1. Watch the four (4) episodes of *Celebr8: A Globe Get Together aired on Studio 23, air dates shall be as follows:
   - a. November 15, Thursday, 8pm
   - b. November 22, Thursday, 9pm
   - c. November 29, Thursday, 9pm
   - d. December 06, Thursday, 9pm
2. During each show, four (4) questions shall be flashed at random, followed by a multiple choice of possible answers. List down the letter that corresponds to the proper answer, until you come up with answers to all four (4) questions.
3. At the end of every show, you will be asked to text in your answers to 2378, following the format illustrated below. Each text message shall be charged an entry fee of PhP 10.00

How to text in your answers:

For example: **1C_2A_3B_4D_First Name_Last Name_Address**
1C, 2A, 3B, 4D represent answers to the 4 questions.
1C means, your answer to the 1st question is letter "C".
2A means, your answer to the 2nd question is letter "A".
3B means, your answer to the 3rd question is letter "B".
4D means, your answer to the 4th question is letter "D".
Make sure you separate your answers with a space.

How many times can you send an entry?

You may text in your correct answers up to 20 times per show/week. On your 21st correct text answer, you shall receive the text message: "You have exceeded the maximum number of entries. Please try again by watching the show next week. Thank you." So, you may text in/send a total of 80 entries during the four-week period of the contest.

How do I know if I sent in the correct answer?

If your answer is correct, you will receive this text message from 2378: "Congratulations! You have the correct answers to our questions! You now qualify in the weekly and grand draws!"

If answer is incorrect, you will receive this text message from 2378: "Your answer is incorrect. Please re-type the sequence with the correct answers and send to 2378 again."

So, only text entries with correct answers and sequence shall be considered as qualified for the contest.

Who will qualify for the weekly and grand draw?

All Globe Handyphone subscribers who texted in the correct answer within the allowed time (see schedule) are qualified and are considered valid. If you qualify, your Globe Handyphone number will be stored in the database of correct and valid entries.

How will the winners be drawn?

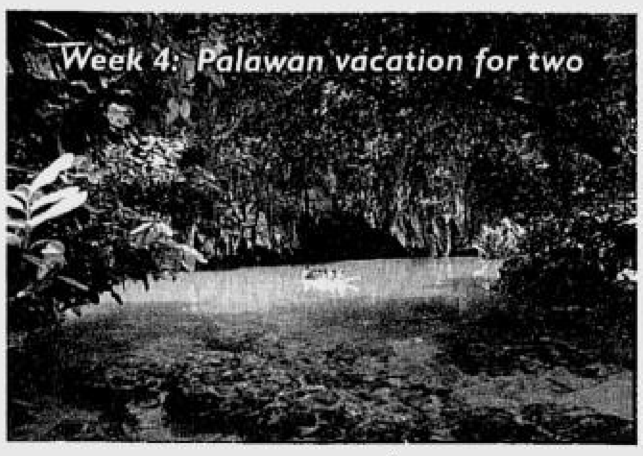
The winners will be drawn via an Electronic Raffle.

How will the Electronic Raffle be conducted?

1. The Electronic Raffle will draw one (1) Globe Handyphone nu randomly from the database of correct and valid entries.
2. Once the winning Globe Handyphone number has been drawn
   - a) Globe Telecom representatives will make a call to subscriber whose number has been chosen in order to n the subscriber that he has won.
   - b) The subscriber will be required to give his name, address, occupation, Handyphone number, mother's maiden name, and wh he/she is affiliated or related to an employee of Globe Tele Harrison Communications, Studio 23, ABS-CBN during the call
   - c) The winning subscriber shall also be notified by registered m
   - d) A second verification with the HR department of Globe Tele Harrison Communications, Studio 23, ABS-CBN shal conducted by a Globe representative.
3. A Globe representative will be given 24 hours to contact the nam the entry via the winning mobile number. If after 24 hours, co with the winning mobile number and the person is stil established, a new number is drawn.
4. There will be one winner for each of the four shows / weekly draw

XT IN...WIN!

Week 3: Cebu escapade for two



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Win in the grand draw!

on Studio 23

t 9:00PM!+

4 to Australia!
Ford Explorer Sport Trac for road trips with friends!*

illion in prizes that lets you get together with family and friends!

5. All correct entries shall automatically be included in the Grand Raffle Draw. There will be one winner for each of the Grand Raffle prizes.
6. Electronic Draw Dates are as follows:

WEEKLY RAFFLE DRAW:

Show Date:	Nov 15	Nov 22	Nov 29	Dec 06
Draw Date:	Nov 19	Nov 26	Dec 03	Dec 10

GRAND DRAW :

Show Date:	Nov 15	Nov 22	Nov 29	Dec 06
Draw Date :		December 12		

Note: You may text in up to 20 correct entries per show or as many as 80 entries for the Grand Draw

What are the prizes?

Four (4) Weekly winners will be drawn.

Weekly prizes: 3 days, 2 nights vacation for 2 persons; inclusive of airfare & accommodation

- Davao package · Boracay package ·
- Cebu package · Palawan package

Three (3) Grand prize winners will be drawn. Grand Draw prizes:

- 1 winner of one (1) Ford Expedition
- 1 winner of one (1) Ford Explorer
- 1 winner of a trip to Australia (4 days, 3 nights vacation for 4 people; inclusive of airfare & accommodation).

The Electronic Raffle will be held on the indicated dates, at 10:00 AM. at the Globe Telecom Plaza in the presence of officials of Globe Telecom and a representative from the Department of Trade and Industry.

Who can claim the prizes:

1. The prize shall be awarded to the subscriber who owns the winning Globe Handyphone number/SIM card.
   - If you are a Prepaid Subscriber, you are considered the valid winner if you possess and present the SIM Card that corresponds to the winning Globe Handyphone number. You must also present a valid ID (Driver's License, Company ID, Passport) indicating the name given in the entry when redeeming your prize.
   - If you are a Plan Subscriber, you are considered the valid winner if you are the owner of the winning Globe Handyphone number based on Globe's database.
   - However, if the winning Globe Handyphone number corresponds to a subscription of a company, whether Plan or Prepaid, the prize shall be awarded to the company.
2. Redemption period shall be within 60 days from receipt of registered mail. If the prize is not claimed within sixty (60) days from notification, the prize shall be forfeited in favor of Globe Telecom.
3. When claiming your prize, you must personally proceed to Marketing Department, 4th Floor, Globe Telecom Plaza, Pioneer cor. Madison Sts., Mandaluyong, Metro Manila during business hours (8:00 AM to 5:00 PM) and present the following:
   - The winning Globe Handyphone number (SIM Card)
   - Valid Identification (Driver's License, Passport, Company ID or, any other valid ID)
   - The Registered Mail sent to you by Globe.
4. If you won and you are a minor, you must be accompanied by your parent/guardian when claiming the prize. You and your parent/guardian should present valid identification. Your parent/guardian should also bring proof that he/she is the parent/guardian.
5. The 20% prize tax shall be borne by Globe Telecom. Any other taxes and registration fees pertaining to the registration of the vehicle awarded as prize shall be borne by the winner. Prize is not convertible to cash.
6. Employees of Globe Telecom, Harrison Communications, Studio 23, ABS-CBN, including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from winning in the promotion.

* Photo of prizes may vary from the actual vehicle.

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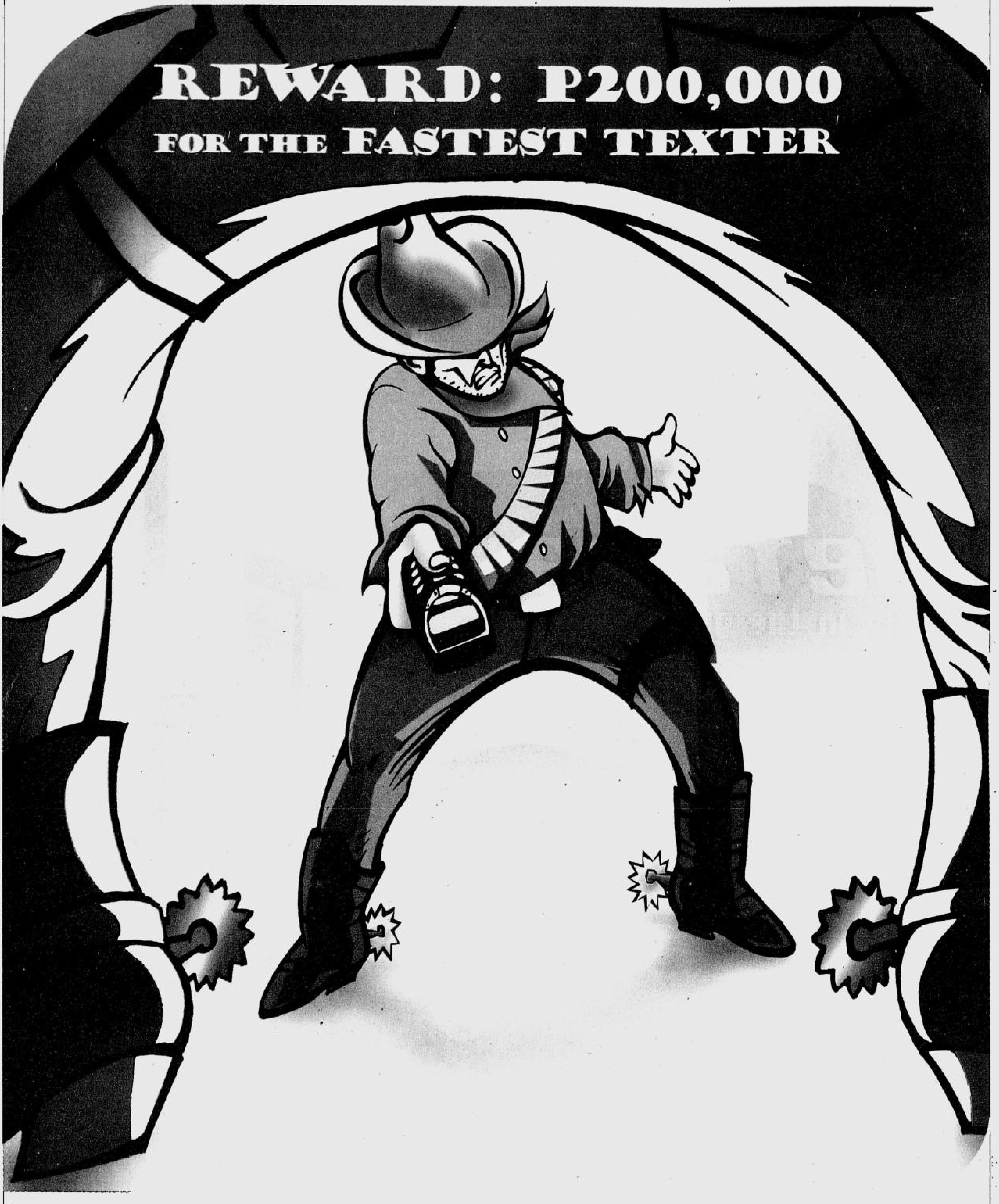
FOR THE FASTEST TEXTER



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Champion : P200, 000 cash plus a Nokia 8310
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2nd runner-up: P75,000 cash plus a Nokia 6210
3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th runners-up: P5,000 cash plus a Nokia 3310
Non-winning finalists will receive P3,000 cash plus Nokia gift packs.

Registration forms will be available from Nov. 17 to Dec. 8, 2001. To qualify, you must own any Nokia mobile phone except models with QWERTY keyboard (Nokia 9000, 9110, 9210 and 5510). Present one valid ID with picture & signature & your completed registration form at any of the 4 elimination round game sites: Nov. 22, Glorietta Activity Center; Nov. 24 & 25, Alabang Town Center Town Plaza; Dec. 1 & 2, Fiesta Carnival, Araneta Center; and Dec. 8 & 9, The Strip, Katipunan. The semi-final and championship rounds will be on Dec. 15 & 16 respectively, Robinson's Place Faura Atrium. Promo runs from Nov. 23 to Dec. 16, 2001. For more information, please call (02) 886-1234 or (02) 894-0424.

Join
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Promo valid in Metro Manila only. See flyers for details.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3906, Series of 2001

FOR FEEDBACK, TEXT US AT (0919) 661-2337 OR EMAIL US AT LIFESTYLE@INQUIRER.COM.PH

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DENCIO'S SPECIALTIES. (From left) Sisig, Sari-saring Sinugba, Pinakbet, Kinilaw na Tangigue, Baked Mussels, Crispy Pata

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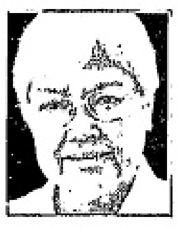
Food and fairways at the Fort

IN GOOD TASTE



Doreen G. Fernandez

DENCIO'S is an old name on Katipunan Avenue, where it opened 20 years ago. It is a new name at The Fort (Bonifacio), where in a bright pavilion with plants growing and breezes blowing, Queenie and Juanmi Laurel opened their franchise six months ago (tel. 887-2741/45/09) Among their 15 partners (that is the style of the young entrepreneurs: many hands-on and consultative partners) are owners of the original restaurant, among them Dencio himself, who is no old *manong*, but young and mustachioed Dennis Nakpil. Juanmi is a devoted cook; Queenie claims she only likes to eat—not a bad combination there.

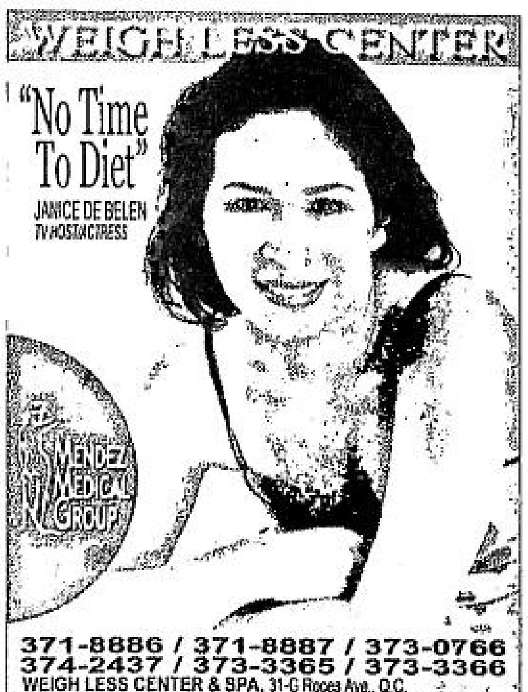
Unusual for the Dencio's formula, however, is the fact that this one has a mini-golf course attached. Here, too, food is served, but mostly for children: sandwiches, hamburgers and spaghetti with the sweetish sauce that children love at their parties.

The food at Dencio's is aimed at the predominantly young drinking crowd that started at Katipunan, but has now grown to include Fort Bonifacio businessmen, military men from the nearby camp, residents of Makati villages and, on weekends, whole families, with the children playing mini-golf and the grownups, to misquote the song, "eating, drinking, never thinking of tomorrow."

Favorite appetizers include *chicharon bulaklak*, *pusit à la pobre* (garlicky), *gambas* sizzling or on a banana leaf, *salpicao*, *kilawing tanigue*, crispy crablets or squidlets or *hipon*, sizzling mushrooms, *siniglaw* (*sinugba* + *kinilaw*) and *ting-a-ling*, which are pigs' ears

FOOD/ p.D7

Festival Supermall Presents
"A CELEBRATION OF LIFE"
A Trade Fair and Exhibit Dedicated to
Weddings, Events, and Party Organizers.
November 23, 24, and 25, 2001
EXPO Trade Hall 4th Level
Festival Supermall, Filinvest Alabang
Exhibit Time: 10:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.
For Details call 8207879, 8201570
Free Admission



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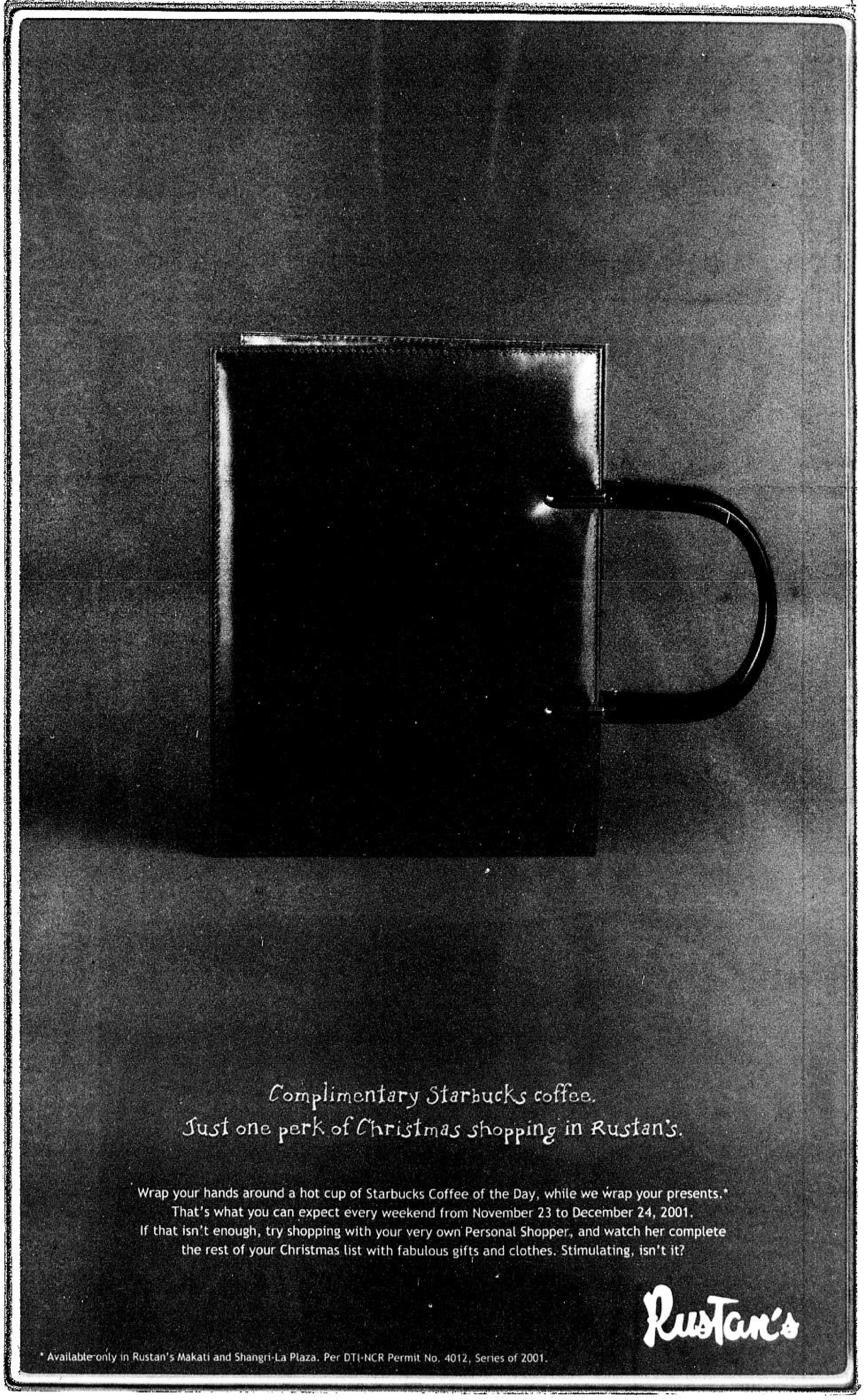
ALL CLIENTS ARE SCHEDULED BY APPOINTMENT*



Complimentary Starbucks coffee.
Just one perk of Christmas shopping in Rustan's.

Wrap your hands around a hot cup of Starbucks Coffee of the Day, while we wrap your presents.*
That's what you can expect every weekend from November 23 to December 24, 2001.
If that isn't enough, try shopping with your very own Personal Shopper, and watch her complete the rest of your Christmas list with fabulous gifts and clothes. Stimulating, isn't it?

Rustan's

* Available only in Rustan's Makati and Shangri-La Plaza. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4012, Series of 2001.

Getting away to Toque

THE MOST recent in a series of intimate Dining Club Getaways, highlighting the cuisine of different regions in different restaurants all over Metro Manila was held at Toque on Dr. Loscano Street just off Tomas Morato, QC.

CRAB Cake Salad

FRUTI di Mare à la Toque

Fly Ace Corp. held this second getaway dining to promote the quality and versatility of its Mediterranean brands: Pietro Coricelli Olive Oil, Federici authentic Italian pasta, Doña Maria's juicy olives and capers and Doña Elena's Portuguese sardines and Spanish anchovies, which are among the consistent top brand sellers in Metro Manila.

Here are the recipes for the star features from Toque.

Crab Cake Salad with Sweet Mango Pimiento Sauce

Crab cake:
160 g crab meat
1 pc white onion, diced
2 pc tomatoes, diced
3 gloves garlic, crushed
1 c bread crumbs
1 tbsp mayonnaise
2 pc egg
6 tbsp corn oil
Salt and pepper
Sauce:
1 pc ripe mango
Lettuce salad with lemon vinaigrette:
20 g assorted lettuce
¼ pc onion, chopped
2 pc lemon
2 c Pietro Coricelli olive oil
Salt and pepper
Garnish:
1 side ripe mango, diced
1 pc red bell pepper, diced

Heat 2 tbsp of corn oil over medium heat. Sauté the garlic, onions and tomatoes until soft. Add the crabmeat and cook for 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Let it cool, then add the mayonnaise. Form the crab mixture into patties. Dip each patty in whole eggs and bread crumbs. Pan-fry in the remaining corn oil until golden brown.

Purée the flesh of the ripe mango, Add 2 tbsp water. Set aside.

Squeeze juice of lemons and strain. Add onions and Pietro Coricelli olive oil. Mix well then season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Mediterrane
Getaway
Dining Cl

TOQUE! owners Gualbert and Marina Picache together with host James Paolelli and Fly Ace CEO Jun Cochanco during the second getaway dining

Arrange assorted lettuce at the center of the plate. Pour vinaigrette over the lettuce, pour mango purée around the plate, then sprinkle diced mango and diced bell pepper around. Serves four.

Fettuccine Al Fruti Di Mare

200 g Federici Fettuccini Pasta (boiled 10 minutes)
¼ c Pietro Coricelli olive oil
12 pc mussels (boiled)
100 g *gambas*
100 g squid
12 pc Doña Maria Green Olives, sliced
12 pc Doña Maria Black Olives, sliced
8 pc sun-dried tomatoes, sliced
1/8 c Parmesan cheese
¼ c Corbett Canyon chauvignon white wine
10 pc basil leaves
2 c tomato concasse
Salt and pepper

GUILTY Pleasures

In frying pan, sauté squid and *gambas* in Pietro Coricelli olive oil for 5 minutes. Pour in the Corbett Canyon white wine and cook, stirring occasionally until has fully evaporated. Add tomato concasse, Doña Maria olives, sun-dried tomatoes. Stir and simmer. Season with salt and peppef. Add the mussels, and then add the Federici Fettuccini pasta. Toss to mix, then finish with basil and Parmesan cheese.

Tomato concasse:
2 c plum-tomato, diced
¼ c Pietro Coricelli olive oil
½ pc onion, finely diced
4 cloves garlic, finely diced

Sauté garlic and onions in ¼ c Pietro Coricelli olive oil over medium heat, until translucent. Add the plum tomatoes, simmer for 15 minutes. Season to taste. Set aside.

Pan-fried Fillet of Seabass with Saffron Risotto in Cabernet Mushroom Sauce

600 g seabass fillet
¼ c Pietro Coricelli olive oil
Salt and pepper
100 g asparagus
Saffron risotto
Cabernet mushroom sauce

Prepare four fillets of seabass weighing 150 g each. Season. Heat Pietro Coricelli olive oil over medium heat and pan-fry fillets until golden brown. Set aside.

Trim asparagus then boil in salted water for 5 minutes. Strain and set aside. Sauté in Pietro Coricelli olive oil when ready to use.

Arrange saffron risotto at the center of the plate. Place the sautéed asparagus over the saffron and top with the seabass. Pour cabernet mushroom sauce around the plate.

Saffron risotto:
300 g risotto
1 pinch saffron threads
500 ml chicken broth
40 g butter
40 g Parmesan cheese

Pan-fry risotto. Add the chicken broth. Simmer until cooked. Add the saffron and mix thoroughly to coat the risotto. Stir in the grated Parmesan cheese and butter. Set aside.

Cabernet mushroom sauce:
¼ c Corbett Canyon red wine
50 g Demi glace powder
50 ml water
50 g button mushroom, sliced

Reduce Corbett Canyon red wine in half. Set aside. In another saucepan, add Demi glace powder and water and reduce to half. Then add the Corbett Canyon red wine and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the mushroom to red wine sauce. Set aside.

Baked Tenderloin of Beef with Polenta Crusted Mashed Potato and Ratatouille in Marsala Wine Sauce

600 g beef tenderloin
400 g spinach
¼ c Pietro Coricelli olive oil
Salt and pepper
Polenta-crusted mashed potato
Ratatouille
Marsala wine sauce
40 g Polenta (fine)
2 pcs eggs
40 g bread crumbs
400 g mashed potato
50 g bell pepper
50 g eggplant
50 g zucchini
40 g onions
50 g tomatoes
5 pcs garlic cloves (crushed)
50 g Demi glace powder
20 ml Marsala wine
10 ml Balsamic vinegar
40 g onion
500 ml water
10 g sugar

Prepare the tenderloin and cut into 150 g each. Season and pan-fry in Pietro Coricelli olive oil to desired doneness.

Trim the spinach and blanch the leaves in salt water. Let cool. Sauté in Pietro Coricelli olive oil the onions and spinach, season to taste.

Place ratatouille at the center of the plate. Add the spinach followed by the polenta mashed potato. Top with tenderloin..Pour the marsala sauce around the plate.

Polenta crusted mashed potato:

Mold mashed potato in a small ring about 125 g each. Add bread crumbs, dip in eggs and finish with polenta. Pan-fry the polenta crusted mashed potato until brown.

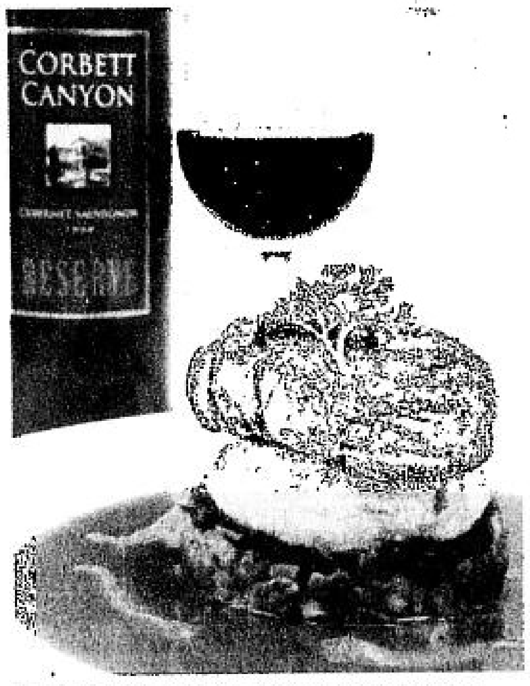
Ratatouillle:

Dice bell pepper, eggplant, zucchini, onions and tomatoes. Sauté garlic and onion. Add the vegetables. Cook for 10 minutes. Season. Set aside.

Mix Demi glace powder in water. Boil then simmer until reduced to half quantity.

Marsala wine sauce:

In small stock pot, mix marsala wine, sugar and balsamic vinegar. Reduced to half. Add the Demi glace and simmer for 10 minutes.



BAKED Tenderloin of Beef with Polenta Crusted Mashed Potato and Ratatouille in Marsala Wine Sauce

PAN-FRIED Fillet of Seabass with Saffron Risotto in Cabernet Mushroom Sauce

MAXI SIZE!
Bigger Chicken plus Coke!
Just add P20 to your favorite Combo Meal*.
*Excludes Atbp. Meal
ADD ₱20
Max's

1. Just add P20 to your favorite Combo Meal* to get a bigger chicken (family size) and a glass of Coke.
2. Customer can avail of the promo on the date of purchase only.
3. Minimum order of five (5) Combo Meals for take-out and delivery.
4. Five (5) glasses of Coke will be replaced by 1.5 liters.
5. However, Maxisize will not apply to delivery orders not divisible by 5
6. Promo good until December 31, 2001

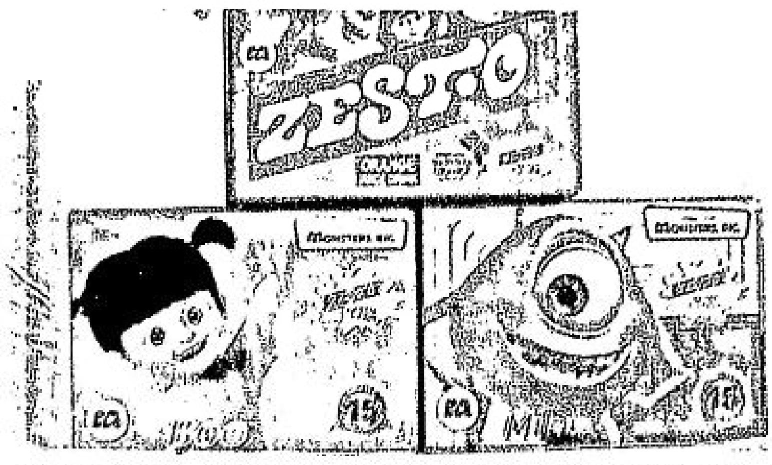
*Platter orders will get an extra glass of Coke or Caramel cake.

Coca-Cola

Max's RESTAURANT

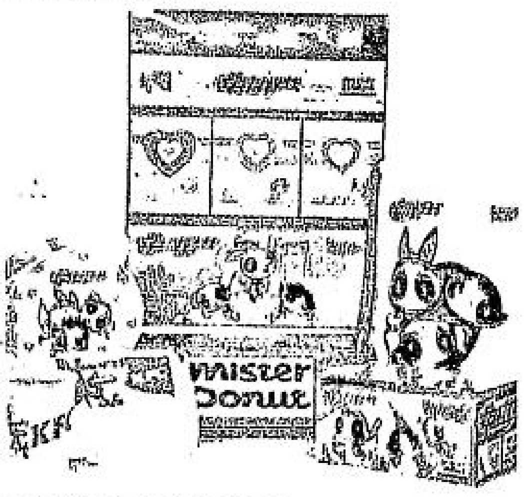
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3962 Series of 2001

Delightful treats



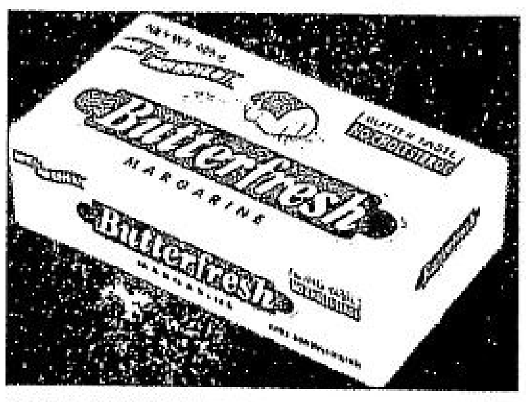
ZEST-O Corp. features a colorful menagerie of monsters and one beguiling human intruder from the Disney movie, "Monsters Inc.," in its Limited Edition Zest-O Juice Drink. The Academy Award-winning creators of "Toy Story" open the door to a frightfully funny world of monsters and mayhem in the hilarious and imaginative new computer-animated feature. Share with your children the exciting adventures of Boo and her friend monsters, Sulley and Mike. The Limited Edition Zest-O Juice Drink will soon be available in all leading supermarkets and malls all over Metro Manila.

JOLLIBEE'S New Glazed Chicken Rice is a hot and steaming rice meal with chicken chunks and a special sauce. A surefire combination rice meal lovers will definitely fall for. Jollibee Glazed Chicken Rice is available in solo or value meal at selected Jollibee stores.



POWERPUFF GIRLS POWERKEEPERS FROM KFC AND MISTER DONUT

Grab the chance to own a Powerpuff letter organizer, shoe bag, utility bag and organizer box every time you purchase a Chuckle Meal (your choice of BBQ Chicken Burger, Spaghetti and Chicken Meals) or with every Mister Donut Funbox (seven pieces of Junior Donut). Prove your girl power and collect all four. It's time to organize your stuff the Powerpuff way. The Powerpuff Girls Powerkeepers promo is available in all KFC and participating Mister Donut outlets until Nov. 30.



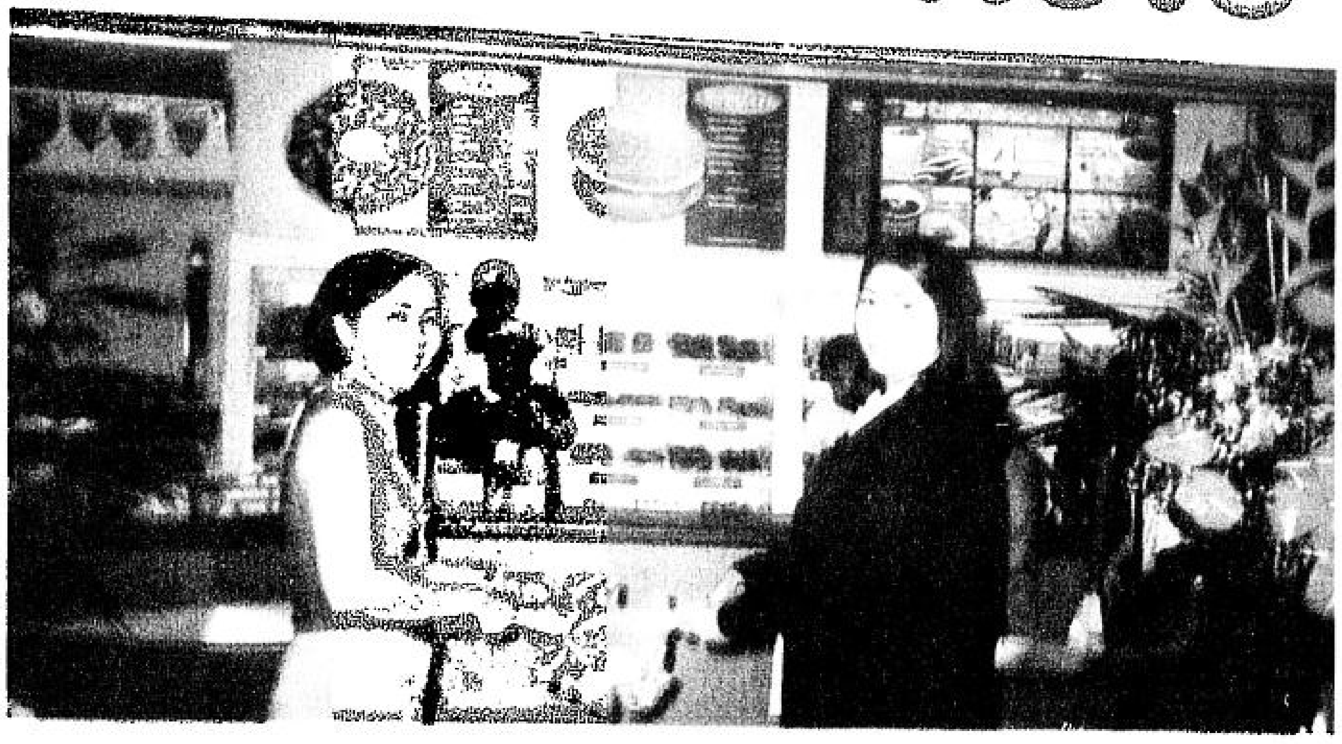
REAL BUTTER TASTE

Experience the taste of real butter with the new improved Butterfresh margarine, which is ideal not only as a sandwich spread but as a cooking ingredient as well. Budget-friendly and cholesterol-free and contains absolutely no animal fat, Butterfresh is a quality product of RFM Corp.

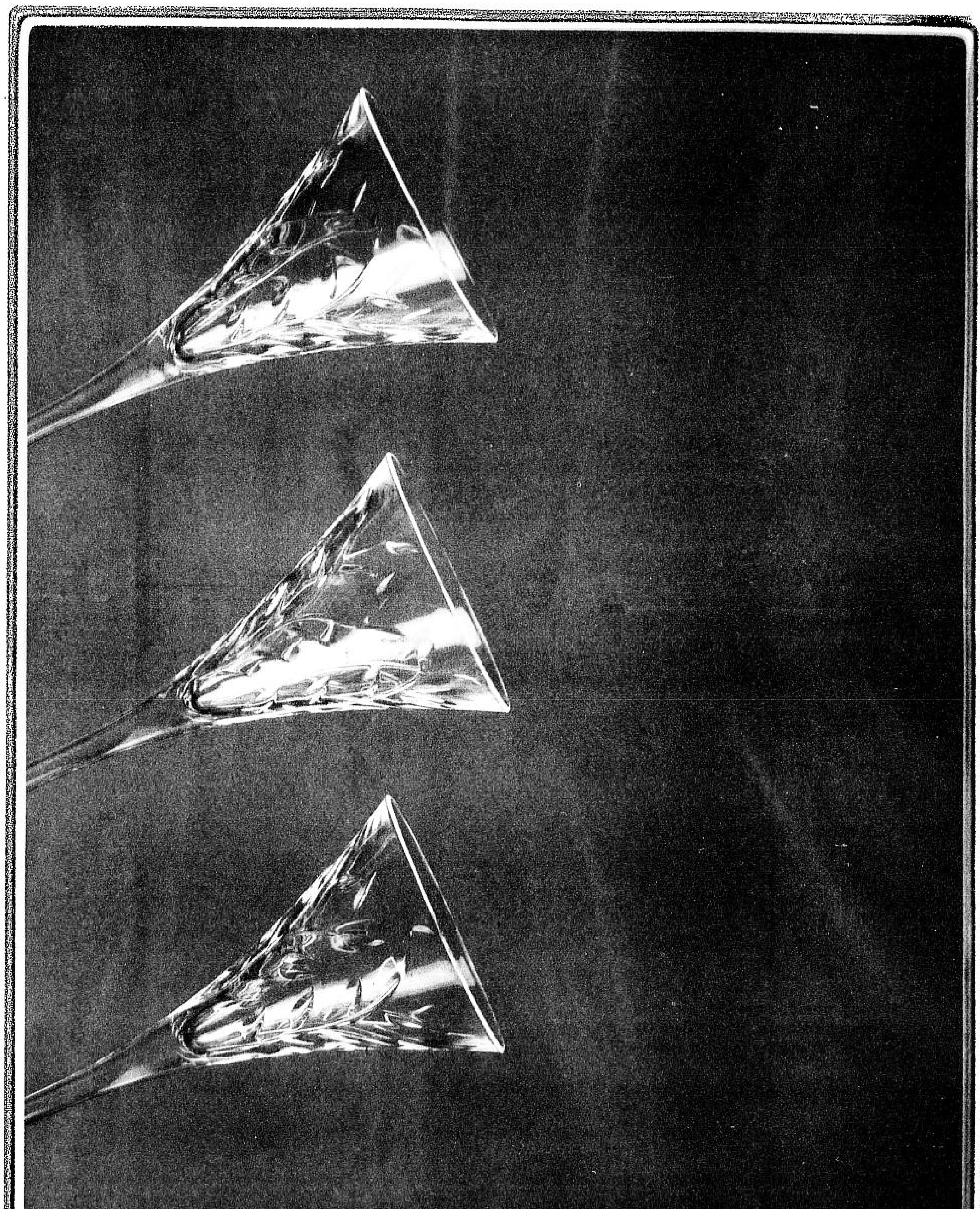
P27
Swirly
treat yourself to a delicious mix of swirling creamy vanilla with bits of chocolate cookies

JOLLIBEE offers the newest Swirly Bitz—Cookies & Cream. It has a delicious combination of swirling creamy vanilla with bits of chocolate cookies that will satisfy your sweet cravings anytime of the day.

DUNKIN' DONUTS®



DUNKIN' Donuts, Pasalubong Ng Bayan, recently re-opened its outlet at Ever Gotesco Grand Central, Caloocan City. The newly renovated branch depicts the young and vibrant spirit of Dunkin' Donuts. Present during the grand reopening were Melinda Juntilla, Dunkin' Donuts Gotesco 1 shop manager (left) and Evelyn Go, executive vice president, Grand Central Dominion Properties and Management Inc.



The Trumpets musical revue.
One of the high notes of Christmas shopping at Rustan's.

Throughout the season, jugglers, mimes, string quartets, and Christmas chorales will amaze, amuse and enthrall you as you browse through our store.* Then on December 15, 16, 22 and 23, cap your gift hunt with the Trumpets' excerpts from "Christmas in the Key of J." in Rustan's Makati. Certainly, 'tis the season for shopping and songs at Rustan's.

Rustan's

* Some activities are limited to selected branches.
Please see print ads & posters for the weekend schedules. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1937, Series of 2001

Valiant attempts by the political equivalent of a fat girl

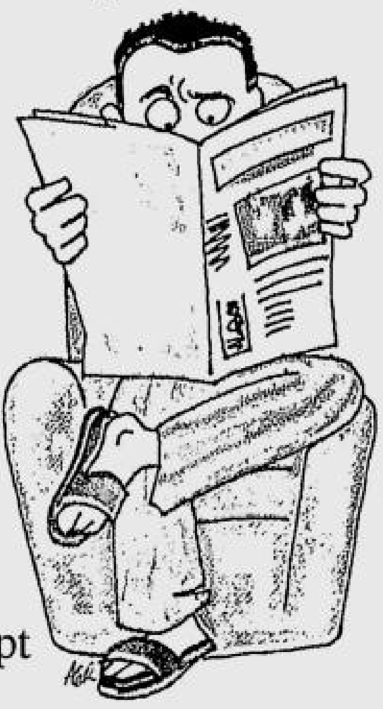
(From page D8)

ner noodle shop, to the presents taken and received within a family. The underworld of prostitutes and drug dealers and private armies for hire. And the backdrop for all of this is the nagging, pervasive, overwhelming sense of poverty. It's not a demi-monde glimpsed in mirrors or palimpsest; it's not a ghetto describable in caricature: it is as present and insidious as the air we breathe, like a moist stench that we have learned to forget.

Defensive pose

And in the midst of this, how can one say with a straight face that Christofle is best of all? How does one justify the whimsical purchase of a pair of high-heeled mules priced at 10 times the legal minimum wage? How can a ballet company ask a beleaguered government for an arts grant to perform "La Bayadere" when there are children starving in the streets? And so on and so forth.

> 'Brush up on history, at least scan the headlines before opening to the Lifestyle section of the paper, try to memorize the names of the senators and which ones are on the side of the angels and which ones are corrupt and villainous'



More to the point, how can I write about food, pursue learning and knowledge (my current interests include the pre-Socratics, the evolution of artificial intelligence and ikebana), and go on living the life of a loner and eccentric? I have little knowledge and interest in current affairs, local or international (though I did hear something recently about a terrorist attack, which might explain why the Manhattan skyline looks vaguely different). I am against didacticism in art and literature. I could be described, then, as an apolitical intellectual.

So now why this strident defensive pose? Could it be the stirrings of a social conscience, or the first flicker of guilt? No, no, no: the guilt has always been there; I was educated by the Jesuits. But several factors have come into play.

First, the ghastly sum of day-to-day living, by which I mean condominium dues, petrol refills and an electric bill that comes from living in a building in cahoots with the power company (windows that don't open, gas stoves prohibited, etc.).

Second, the stigma when I meet up with old journalist friends from my days at the editorial desk of the Manila Times as a food columnist, as opposed to a "real" columnist, by which I suppose they mean the ones who lurk in hotel lobbies, listen for coup rumors, and can actually name all the incumbent senators. And finally, there is an ongoing debate on "apolitical intellectuals" on Plaridel Papers, the message board for the left-wing intelligentsia of the country. Vince Rafael responded, in typical fashion, by demanding a definition of "intellectual" and "political," and then hammering his point in with an argument using etymology. I distrust arguments that draw on etymology, mainly because I never know if someone is pulling my leg or not, but I'm in his camp on this one.

It would be easy to dismiss this question of the relevance or triviality of what I write about, what I concern myself about while stuck in traffic, or indeed, the way I have chosen to live my life, with a witty Wildean paradox or inversion; or I could say (which amounts to the same thing) that art requires no justification, or something along those lines: But art has been invoked as a convenient excuse for dilettantism, idleness ("I'm gestating"), or simple bad behavior far too often. Instead, I will commit a logical fallacy by responding to an intellectual argument with an emotional one. We can dress it up a little by calling it "phenomenological," a convenient word that looks impressive on paper (but is useless in verbal debates because it is virtually unpronounceable when in full swing).

Like girls who eat salads

I have long cringed in the shadows (or faked it by nodding at my interlocutor in a knowing, cynical manner) whenever politicized people, many of whom are my friends, discuss current events, compare and contrast the ongoing war against terror with, say, the Crimean War, and, of course, spew scorn and mockery upon the "unpoliticized." Later that evening I would bow my head in shame and make resolutions to myself: brush up on history, at least scan the headlines before opening to the Lifestyle section of the paper, try to memorize the names of the senators and which ones are on the side of the angels and which ones are corrupt and villainous.

One of my closest friends is a political columnist, and he valiantly tries to keep me updated by sending me occasional text messages, such as "SUPRM CORT UNAN!" which I at first thought was an editorializing metaphor likening the Supreme Court to a pillow, but turned out to be jubilant news that the Supreme Court had reached a unanimous vote. There was something vaguely familiar, though, about these resolutions that I was making but which I never managed to keep; and finally, I recognized what it reminded me of: girls who eat salads.

Being someone who is politicized, I concluded, is like being a girl who is slim. Everyone acknowledges that it is desirable for girls to be thin. However, some girls can eat as much as Michelin men and still remain willowy without exercising, while others eat salads without dressing and brown rice and still balloon up to the proportions of a sports utility vehicle. Now, fat girls who desperately want to be thin can, by eating foliage or with the aid of fenphen or by using those sadomasochistic torture machines at the gym (the Nordic Rack traces its antecedents to ancient Norwegian practices of inquisition), actually become thin for a while. For those who believe that looks are of paramount importance, they will actually continue with these insane practices until they get married, at which point they will suddenly expand, like one of those vacuum-packed pillows. But most of them realize at some point that it isn't worth it. A few will actually try to change the definition of "beautiful"; this was an attempt at political correctness that resulted in several fashion magazines doing glamour shots of appallingly ugly people. In the end, though, recognizing the limits of one's attributes is the sanest, healthiest thing to do; and a certain percentage of the population must simply sigh and resign themselves to the fact that they are fat people.

In the same way, while I would desperately like to be politicized, to be able to discuss Marx and Stalin, or have insider information on various congressmen's secret assets, I have come to accept that I am the political equivalent of a fat girl. I did the equivalent of crash dieting when I found myself having to write daily editorials at the Manila Times, but in my off-hours I inevitably wandered over to the side of the office where they edited the fashion magazine (which had the added attraction of having in their employ as editorial assistants young, impressionable and generally pleasant-looking girls). And so just as plump single females find other ways of being attractive (being pleasant and humorous, wide-ranging intellect and wit, having the reputation of being an easy lay, etc.), I make my most valiant attempts to be an intellectual outside the realm of the political. One can engage in Jesuitic semantics and redefine what it means to be political (e.g., all that has to do with power, or choices, or "engagement" with the world); but in the final analysis, there's no getting away from the fact that if you switch on my television set, it's more likely to be tuned in to MTV or Fashion TV than CNN or BBC.

Thus the saga continues. Just as obese women occasionally gaze wistfully at the tall thin women who pass by and decide to pass on dessert, I subscribe to several political mailing lists and attempt to read headlines. In the meantime, I live with the fact that I am an ivory-tower intellectual with diverse interests in various arcane and useless subject, one which is popularly known as "the food guy": and I try my best to be good at what I do; and once in a while glance up from my latest recipe book acquisition and try to find out what happened to the World Trade Center. It was, after all, the site of the Windows on the World restaurant (Zagat rating: 21), and as a food columnist, this is an important thing to know.

E-mail the author at Clinton@i-manila.com.ph

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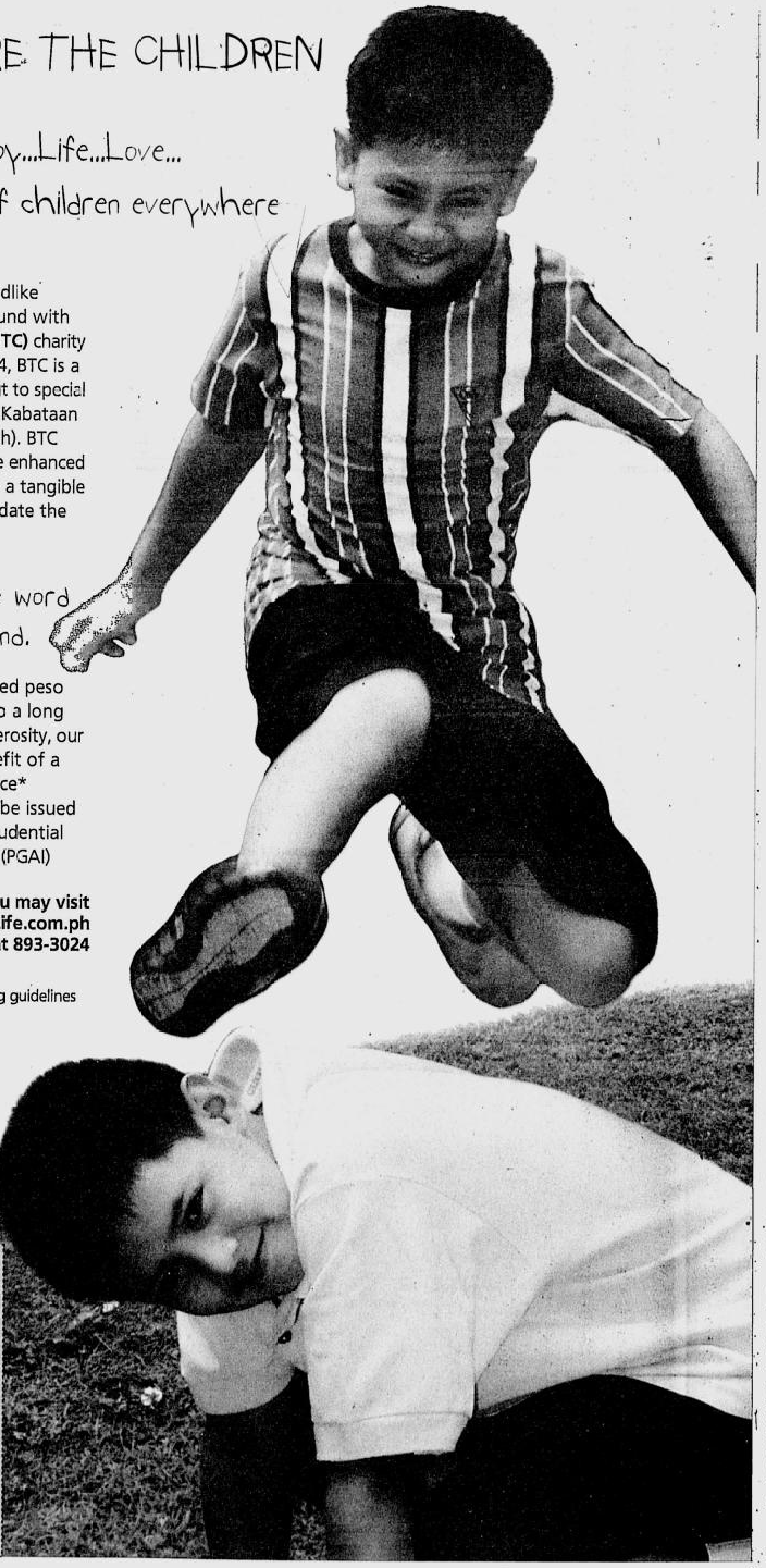


Something to be thankful for: a ready-cooked turkey meal

DINING OUT

HANG your apron and drop by Nielsen's Restaurant at The Peninsula Manila for a relaxed Thanksgiving buffet lunch and dinner for only P795++. Today, feast on traditional Thanksgiving fare like Corn Fritters with Cured Salmon and Chives Sour Cream, Barley Soup with Chestnut Ravioli, Roast Turkey with Giblet Gravy, Corn Stuffing and Ragout of Vegetables, Ice Box Strawberry Cheesecake and Pumpkin Pie with Double-Rich Vanilla Ice Cream. If you're planning a party, you can avail of a menu consisting of Pumpkin and Caramelized Apple Bisque with Toasted Pecans Oven-Roasted Turkey with Chestnut-Sage Stuffing, Potato Mash, Maple-Infused Sweet Potato, Glazed Carrots, Brussels Sprouts with Bacon and Shallots, Giblet Gravy and Cranberry Sauce and your choice of Apple or Pumpkin Pie from Exclusivites delicatessen at The Pen's lower lobby shopping arcade. Call 887-2888, local 2950 or 2968.

DUSIT HOTEL. Christmas season is in the air and it wouldn't be complete without that all-time Filipino favorite—the traditional and delicious *puto bumbong* and *bibingka*. Until Dec. 31 at 3-8 p.m., Dusit Hotel Nikko will be offering *puto bumbong* and *bibingka* at The Deli Shop. Guests may order a plate of *bibingka* or *puto bumbong* with their choice of steaming hot coffee, tea or *salabat* for only P185 and P145, respectively, or have it à la carte for only P145 for *bibingka* and P95 for *puto bumbong*. Also available for breakfast at 5-9 a.m. on Dec. 16-23 for Dawn Mass attendees. Call 867-3333, local 3356 or 3346.

OUTBACK RESTAURANT offers a wide selection of brews and spirits at its bar area. Every Wednesday night at Outback Glorietta IV and every Friday night at Outback Libis and Alabang Town Center, ladies at the bar are entitled to their choice of the Wallaby Darned or Gold Coast 'Rita on the house. Offer starts at 6 p.m. Enjoy them with Aussie-tizers like the Bloomin' Onion, Kookaburra Wings, Aussie Cheese Fries, Grilled Shrimp on the Barbie and Gold Coast Coconut Shrimp. Local beers are available for only P30 and authentic Australian beers like Foster's and Victoria Bitter for only P55. And if you fancy one mean brew, there's the Aussie-sized 22-ounce Big Bloke Draft.

THE TOWER CLUB'S CONTINENTAL presents the Carving Trolley, its latest treat for members and guests during lunch or dinner. Roasted Prime Rib, King and Queen cut, is brought to your table and your choice slice carved right in front of you. Flown exclusively into the country for the Club, the Prime Rib is among the most select meat prepared and yet is one of the most reasonably priced premier cuts. This distinction has established the reputation of the Continental, along with the Taipan, as the choice dining option of the industry's leading figures.

CAFÉ PLAZA'S Wednesday dinner buffet at The Westin Philippine Plaza offers a "Seafood Harvest" featuring varied fresh catch from the sea. Pick from an abundant selection of Fresh Oysters, Norwegian Smoked Salmon, Snapper, Tiger Prawns, Crabs, Scallops and other seafood favorites prepared in different ways. Buffet costs P725 for adults and P409 for children 11 years old and below (prices are exclusive of 10 percent service charge and local government tax). Call 551-5555, local 1531.

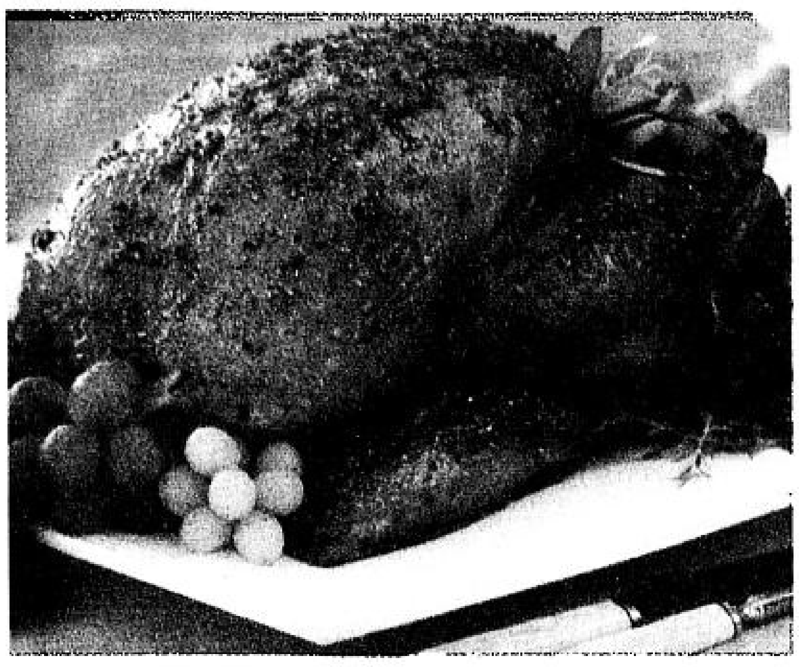
AIOLI serves dishes ranging from Western standards to exotic Oriental favorites. For first-time diners, aioli crab fingers are highly recommended. These are crispy fried fresh crabmeat coated with breadcrumbs and served with a special dip. Satisfying for both light and heavy eaters. Also must-try dishes are Thai Satay (chicken marinated in curry with peanut sauce), Korean Chix BBQ (chicken marinated in spicy-sweet sesame soy sauce), Squid Tactics (stuffed with herbs and veggies grilled to perfection), Houston Special (pork sparerib served with spicy barbecue sauce, Pinoy Fiesta (traditional *inihaw na liempo*) and Peking Ribs (pork spareribs with sweet sauce). Call 687-4004.

CAFÉ ASTORIA recently unveiled its new menu. Executive chef Lorenzo Agliam has created two filling vegetarian entrées to give non-meat eaters better choices: Vegetable Samosa on a bed of crispy lettuce with fried tofu and honey dressing and Almond Breaded Vegetable Kebab served with sautéed *bokchoy* and noodles with asparagus sauce. Entrées that make the difference include Astoria's Mariscos (sautéed white shrimps, squid, salmon fillet and vegetables gratinated with oriental hollandaise and mashed potatoes); Crispy Fried Chicken is served with pineapple coleslaw and fried sweet potatoes and Grilled Pork Loin served with sautéed Baguio beans, turmeric rice and pommery sauce.

Café Astoria is located at G/F, Astoria Plaza, J. Escriva (formerly Amber Avenue), Ortigas Business District, Pasig City. Call 687-1111.

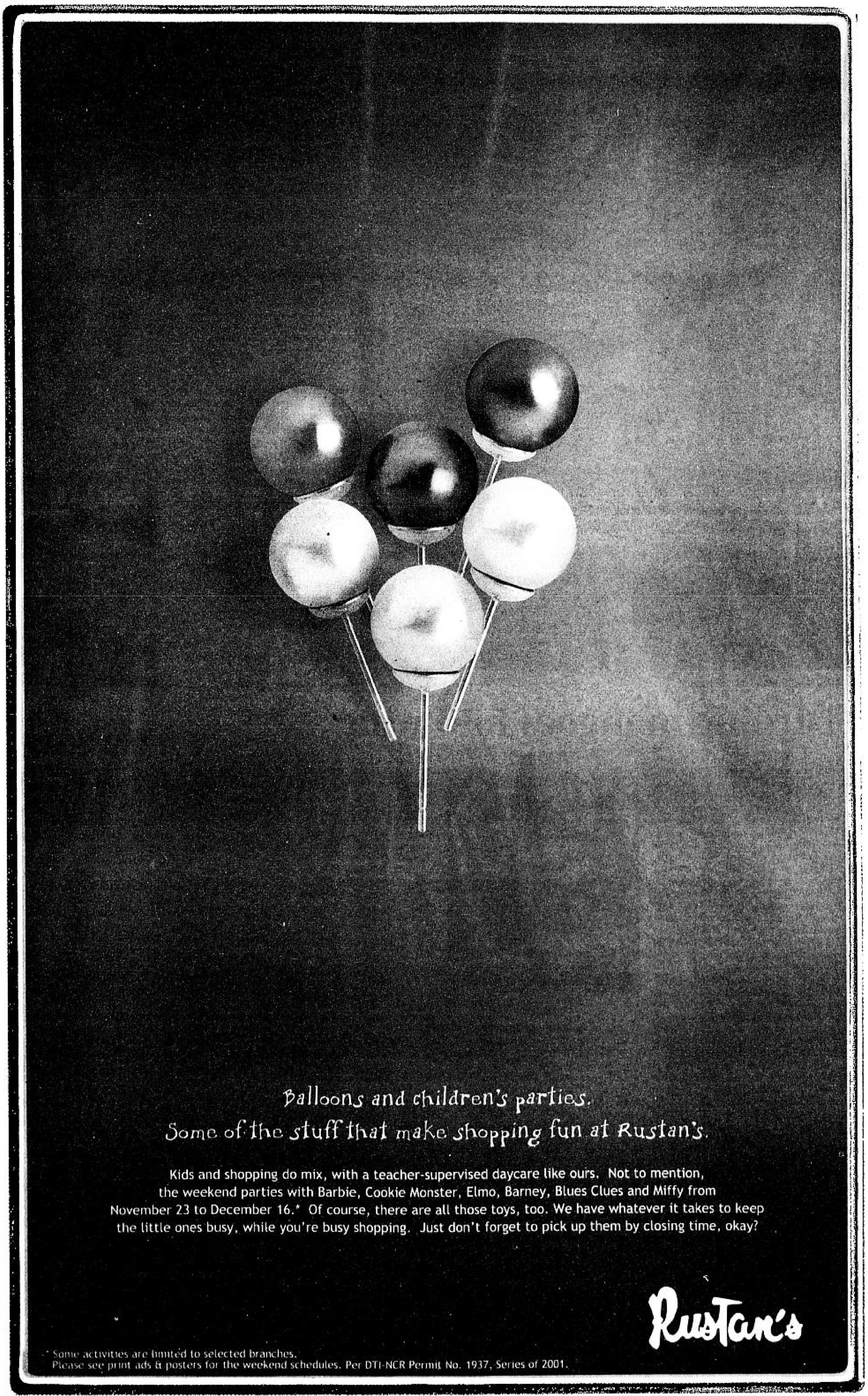
TERIYAKI BOY, the newest food craze among Japanese food lovers, offers an extensive menu, from appetizers like Chawan Mushi, Ebi Gyoza to salads like Kani, Kaizoku Seafood or Teriyaki Boy Salad to a long list of Teriyaki, Agemono and Furai dishes. Specialty of the house is the Teriyaki Boy Chicken, made from marinated boneless chicken dipped in specially prepared teriyaki sauce. Highly recommended are Maguro Teriyaki, broiled tuna on sweet and sour sauce; Sake Teriyaki, Norwegian Salmon with sweet sauce and imported Gindara. The big surprise are the prices that range from P35 for Chawan Mushi to P220 for imported Gindara. For real savings, try their Don Buri rice toppings like Katsudon, Teriyaki Boy Chicken Don, Sukiyaki Don or Unagi Don all priced from P120 to P220. Open from 11 am to 12 midnight from Sunday to Thursday, and from 12 noon to 1 a.m on Friday and Saturday. Teriyaki Boy is along Madison Square, Ortigas Avenue in Pasig.

RAPHAEL CAFÉ-RESTAURANT at the Manila Galleria Suites lets you experience the rich flavors of Japan through its Japanese Food Festival ongoing until Nov. 24. Feast on Poached Salmon Moso Maki, Suimono, Okonomi Sushi and Mokinomo Kappa. Try the buffet spread of Temaki and Sansho Ku Maki, Spicy Quail with Mirin Glaze and Lotus Root with Umeboshi Sauce. There's Tonkatsu and Octopus in Hot Sauce. This oriental buffet spread guarantees to bring you delight for only P600++ per adult and P400++ per child. Call 633-7111, local 7416/7440.



ROASTED TURKEY. As traditional as it gets at The Pen

PUTO *bumbong* and *bibingka* at Dusit



Balloons and children's parties.
Some of the stuff that make shopping fun at Rustan's.

Kids and shopping do mix, with a teacher-supervised daycare like ours. Not to mention, the weekend parties with Barbie, Cookie Monster, Elmo, Barney, Blues Clues and Miffy from November 23 to December 16.* Of course, there are all those toys, too. We have whatever it takes to keep the little ones busy, while you're busy shopping. Just don't forget to pick up them by closing time, okay?

Rustan's

* Some activities are limited to selected branches.
Please see print ads & posters for the weekend schedules. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1937, Series of 2001.

MELT the chocolate with water in a pan on low heat. Stir constantly until the mixture is smooth.

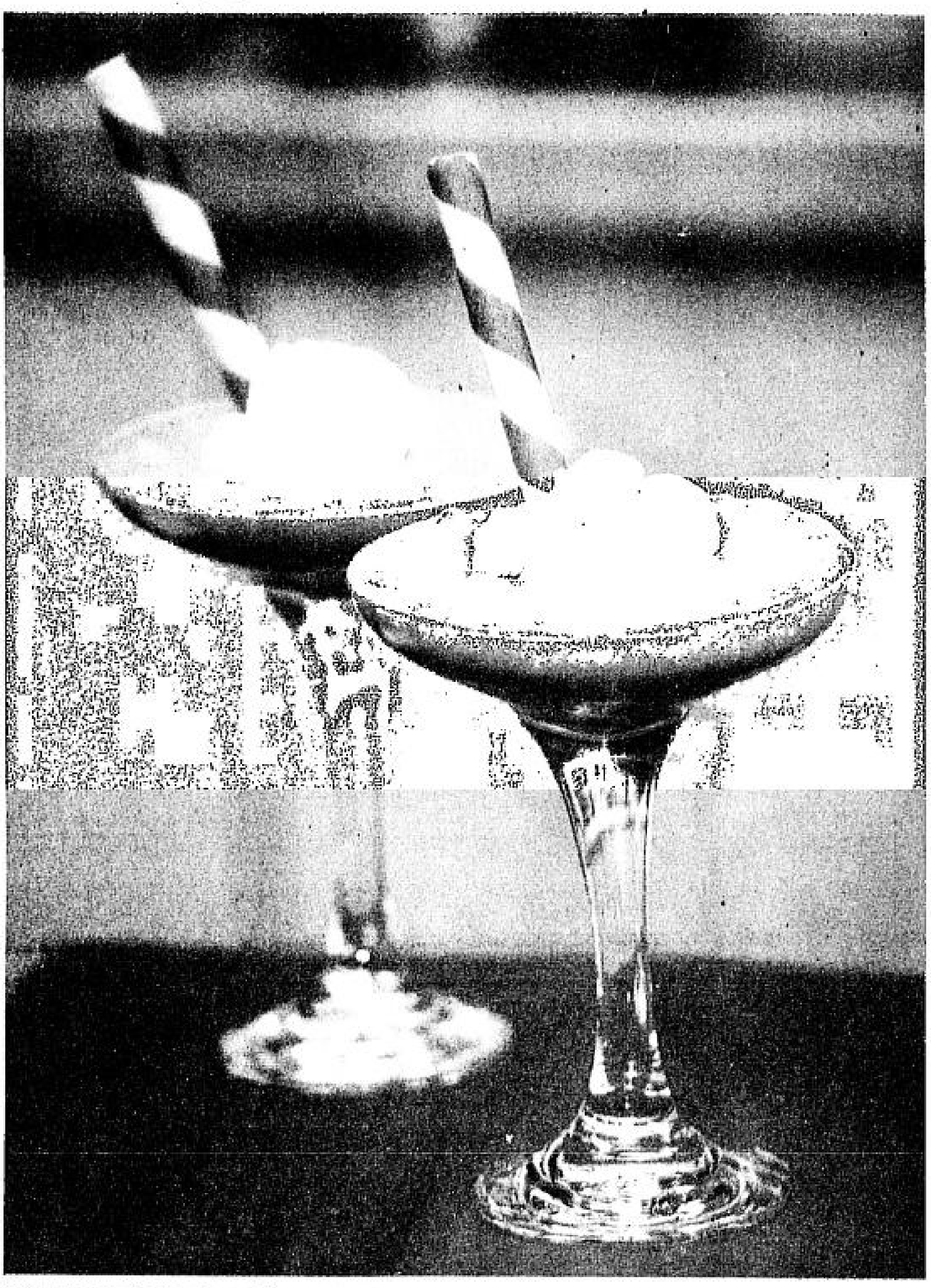
BEAT in the egg yolks, off heat. Return to heat and whisk the mixture over low heat for a few minutes until it thickens slightly. Remove from heat.

STIR in the liqueur. Cool completely.

WHIP the egg whites with the sugar until stiff peak.

FOLD in egg whites mixture into the chocolate mixture.

Snap-to-make choco mousse



VOILA! Luscious chocolate mousse

By Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Mike Alquinto

CHOCOLATE mousse is always delicious, plus it's easy and fast to make. In 30 minutes, you can whip up this rich, dreamy and velvety smooth chocolate dessert that will easily impress your loved ones.

STEP-BY-STEP

This soft-set mousse looks awesome and appetizing especially when poured into elegant parfait glasses or custard cups and chilled until perfectly set. Chef Pixie Sevilla of Forget Me Not (tel. 723-2776) says chocolate mousse is always a perfect finale to a homemade dining experience. It ends a meal with elegant sophistication.

The principal ingredient for this recipe is, of course, the bittersweet chocolate, whipped and blended with cream and eggs. A hint of liqueur perks up the flavor. So, feel free to use a liqueur of your choice—rum, Bailey's, brandy, triple sec, whisky, orange liqueur or kirsch.

This snap-to-make recipe will give you a light and fluffy chocolate mousse. Remember, prior to serving, ice a swirl of whipped cream on each glass, sprinkle a pinch of cocoa powder and top with cherry. Yield: 10 glasses.

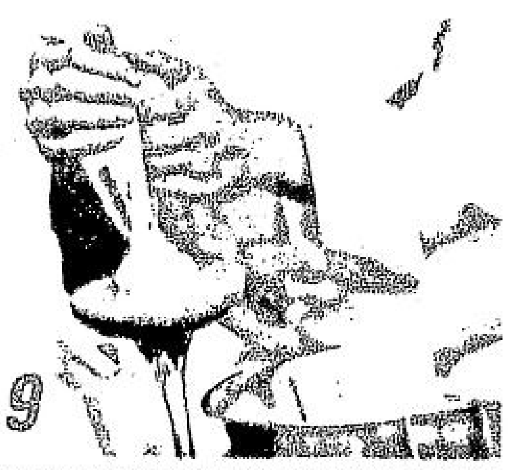
Ingredients:
500 g bittersweet chocolate
½ c plus 2 tbsp water
9 egg yolks
2 tbsp liqueur
9 egg whites
½ c sugar
2 c heavy cream

E-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

WHIP cream until stiff peak.

FOLD in the whipped cream into the chocolate mixture.

POUR the mousse into serving bowls or individual dishes. Chill for several hours.



BEFORE serving, top with whipped cream, white chocolate, nuts or *barquillos*.

Turning mangoes into wine

ANY gathering becomes doubly significant when the cork is popped and the brew is passed around, imbibed and savored in the spirit of making merry.

Wishing to make men feel in high spirits, Roberto "Oby" Castañeda decided to go into the business of making wine. He uses the most unlikely ingredients: green and ripe mangoes. Not surprisingly, he deems his entry into the wine business as divine providence.

While doing a feasibility study on the food business in 1999, Oby wrote, composed and directed a musical stage play for a congregation of nuns in Baguio City. Oby, who hails from Imus, Cavite, decided to undertake this vocation in the whole of the Cordilleras because of an innate love for music and theater, and his unwavering commitment to God. This religious order was organized by a group of Belgian priests and nuns who came to Baguio City five decades ago with the sole purpose of spreading the Christian faith to the natives of the Cordilleras.

Along with the teachings of Christ, they also brought with them a secret recipe for making fruit wine. Developed centuries earlier in their mother country and handed down from one generation to the next, this closely guarded recipe was in turn passed on by the Belgian sisters to their native counterparts who used strawberries, cherries and guavas that grew abundantly in the verdant valleys of the region.

As God would have it, the present-day congregation bequeathed the secret recipe to Oby as a token of gratitude for his act of charity. "I was both honored and elated with the gift. I knew how they safeguarded this recipe for centuries so I felt I received a treasure that was both rare and holy," tells Oby.

Oby wasted no time in putting the recipe to work. He returned to Imus and established Don Roberto's Winery in October last year and began making fruit wine.

Oby decided to use the country's rich yield of world-class green and ripe mangoes in wine fermentation. After a year of thorough experimentation, he was finally able to perfect the winemaking process to come up with an improved mango wine—the first of its kind in the world. Made only from the best mangoes from the orchards of Central Luzon, the wine possessed the exotic aroma of the tropics and a luscious body. Smooth in consistency, the mango wines have a fruity taste that is exquisite but not cloying.

"It's an intriguing wine and it is unique in the sense that it combines the Western tradition of winemaking with the robust tropical flavors of the East," says Oby with evident pride.

On Dec. 2, 7:30 p.m., Oby will give the public its first sip of his intriguing wines as he launches Don Roberto's Green and Sweet (Yellow) Mango Wines at the Arkdia on Remedios Street, Malate. The event promises to be a celebration of food, fine wine and fashion as The Dream Maker's Bill Calubaquib unveils his evening wear in wine colors with guests Bimbo Cerrudo, John Melo, Twilight Harmony, to be directed by Mon Mapua.

Real-deal chocolate ice cream is here

HERSHEY'S, the maker of chocolates the world loves, is giving Filipinos a well-deserved treat for making Hershey's the top chocolate brand in the Philippines—ice cream.

But it's no ordinary ice cream, enthuses Sonny Castro, product manager of Hershey Premium Ice Cream. "We did not compromise on the ingredients. Each scoop is 100-percent Hershey's. It's the least we could do to thank all the chocoholics who have made Hershey's bars and bite-sized chocolates the undisputed No. 1 in the Philippine market."

He adds, "Not only does it have chunks and chunks of Hershey's chocolate, it is made of other select ingredients like butterfat and 100-percent Hershey's premium cocoa for that one-of-a-kind eating experience. It's chocolate ice cream like no other."

Hershey's decided to set up its own ice cream business here in the Philippines after seeing the enthusiastic response of ice cream lovers to a Hershey's special edition initiated by another ice cream company a few years back, says Castro.

"It was such a hit that we decided to not just put real Hershey's chocolate in the ice cream but make the ice cream out of real Hershey's chocolate," he says.

Outside the United States, it is only in the Philippines where Hershey's markets Hershey's Premium Ice Cream—a testament to every sweet-toothed Pinoy whose penchant for chocolates is matched only by his fondness for ice cream.

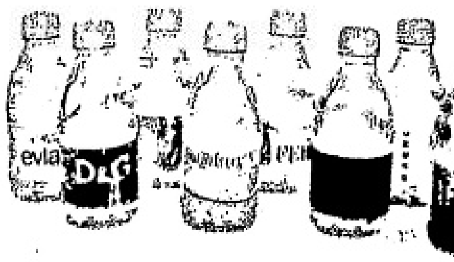
According to Castro, customer response to the five new flavors—Milk Chocolate, Triple Choco Delight, Double Dutch, Cookies 'n' Creme and Hugs and Kisses—has been very encouraging.

"Hershey's Premium Ice Cream is doing great despite being the newest entrant in the ice cream market. Sales are picking up, which goes to show that Filipinos appreciate the premium we put into the brand," Castro explains.

The premiums notwithstanding, Castro says Hershey's Premium Ice Cream is still priced lower than imported and local premium ice cream. And until Nov. 30, chocolate ice cream lovers can taste Hershey's Premium Ice Cream for only P5 per scoop at selected supermarkets all over Metro Manila!

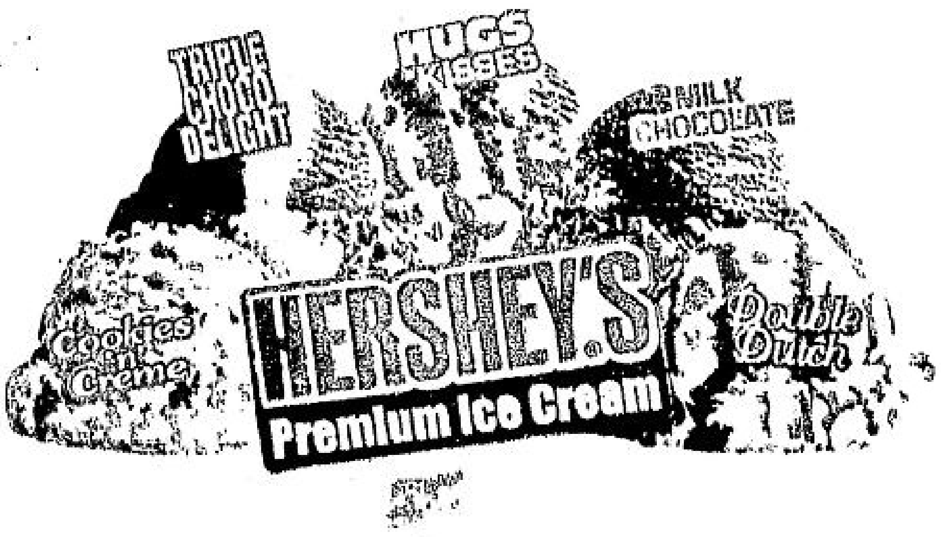
Designer bottles for classy water

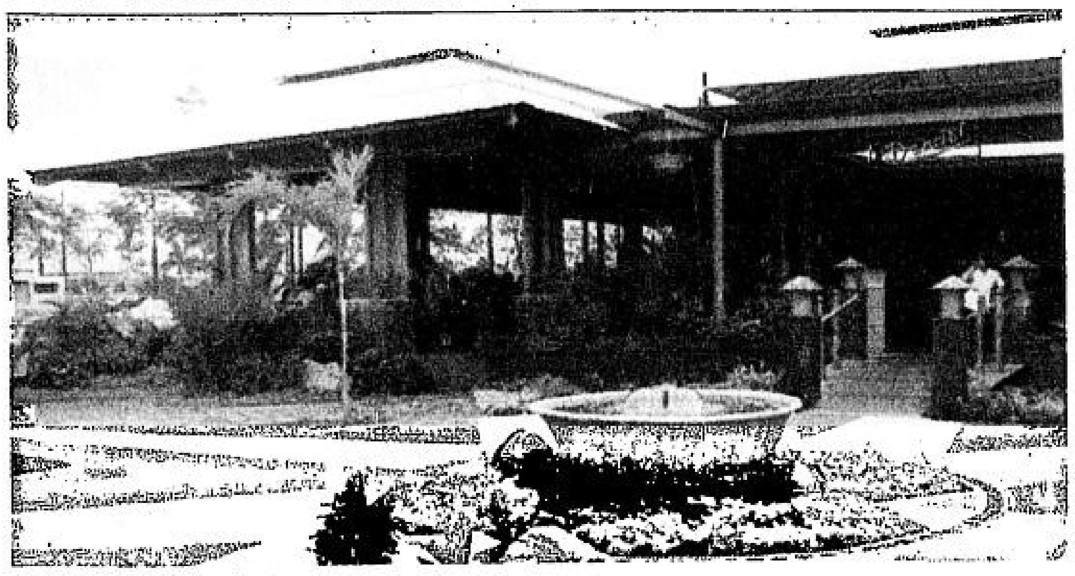
AT THE INFLUENTIAL Milan Fashion Week 2001, Evian uncorked the exciting event by introducing limited-edition Evian bottles designed by the who's who of the fashion world. Seven of the most important Italian designers contributed extraordinary labels. Gianfranco Ferre's was striking in scarlet and black while the House of Dolce & Gabbana went cyber with a lively mosaic design. Hot new designer Marni was optic in a khaki and hot pink bubble design, while Romeo Gigli went all ocean waves. Missoni and Fendi showed some of their famous fashion photographic portfolio while Pucci used its signature pink in lime and lemon. The Evian 330-ml bottles literally became the toast of the town, becoming the favorite must-have designer drink of the fashion gliteratti.



From Yves St. Laurent to Gucci, Cindy Crawford to Tyra Banks, Evian has always been in the company of today's fashion greats. For supermodels, designers and fashion icons on and off the runways of the world's fashion capitals, Evian natural spring water is the ultimate fashion accessory.

In Manila, Evian intends to repeat the coup by inviting the most exciting names in various areas of design to create the Manila-edition Evian Designer Labels, ranking Filipino talents with the biggest and best in the world of international design.





DENCIO'S at The Fort

Food and fairways at the Fort

(From page D1)

boiled soft, sliced and fried crisp. I liked the latter best, but Queenie and Juanmi were trying it for the first time.

Rice comes plain, Java, garlic or fried with *tinapa*, which is excellent. Salads include *talong*, *mangga at bagoong* and *ensaladang mangga*. Vegetable dishes start with *laing*, a Tagalog-style *pinakbet* (no *ampalaya*), *pinasingawan na gulay* and *adobong kangkong*. I told them that this latter was part of the diet prescribed for boxer Onyok Velasco when he won his gold medal, and it surprised him that eating his native *kangkong* (in a dish Ilonggos call *apan-apan*) "*lumalakas ang palo ko*."

Nine kinds of 'sinigang'

I loved the fact that there were nine kinds of *sinigang*—*ulo ng maya-maya*, *ulo ng* Chilean sea bass and *ulo ng* Norwegian salmon (an international head count indeed), as well as *sinigang* of *buntot ng* tuna, *sugpo*, *bangus* belly, *baka*, *baboy* and *sinampalukang manok*. That day, however, the waiters were apologetic: there were no *sampaloc* young leaves and flowerets in the market or commissary, so our chicken was cooked with tamarind water.

The Dencio's box-office hits are, without a doubt, says Queenie, Crispy Pata, Sizzling Bangus Belly, Bicol Express, Inihaw na Panga'ng Tuna, Nilasing na Hipon sa Taba ng Talangka, Tuna Belly and Crispy Buntot ng Tuna.

Signature Dencio's dishes are Oriental Chicken BBQ, Inihaw na Pusit, Grilled Blue Marlin, Sari-saring Sinugba (grilled pork, seafood and chicken for four persons) and Sisig, "our very own special crispy version." Noodles include Pancit Dencio's and Pancit Divino—intriguing and, we hope, divine.

The prices are comparatively low: P110-P145 for most entrées; P105-P165 for appetizers. The tendency is to try various items—and perhaps to find no room left for desserts, which are worth trying; Buko Pandan, Panacotta, Leche Flan, Ginumis, Mango Flan, Minatamis na Saging at Sago and more.

Perhaps, Juanmi suggests, a round of mini-golf, then back for dessert?

A page-long drink list starts with Dencio's Frozen Margarita, and goes through 44 cocktails, including Amaretto Soup, Zombie and Weng-weng. Also flaming drinks, house wines, rum and whiskey, gin, tequila and vodka.

"Our biggest advantage," says Queenie, is that we have, at the moment, unlimited parking all around the freestanding building and those beside it. "Our biggest disadvantage," says Juanmi, is that it is hard to get here without a car." Although there is a shuttle bus in The Fort that stops right beside Dencio's, it stops at midnight, and it is a long walk out to public transportation. Ownership or use of a car is a given.

The big advantage, however, seems to be the coolness: two pavilions are open-sided; one is air-conditioned, and usually crowded for lunch. In the evenings, with breezes blowing (and no traffic), the open pavilions and tables outside are the premium choices. Cool, clean fresh air. Enjoy it.

Holiday postscript

GOOD news: Ju.D. Lao's fabulous fruitcakes are already available for ordering (call 633-0260/1188 or fax 633-0808). Ju.D.'s fruitcakes are classics: Ju.D. Gold combines dark fruit and nuts with a light golden overlay; Ju.D. Blue has the luxurious taste of Blue Mountain coffee—unusual in any cake. Chewy Chewkies are mini-cakes or giant cookies, depending on the way you look at them. All are beautifully and professionally packaged: one could almost bid just for the boxes.

Quiet Mari Delfin, daughter of Ambassador Bienvenido Tan Jr., and thus member of a cooking clan, has a home-cooked food line called Country Dolphin (tel. 810-6170; 812-3412). I like her Tamales, her Carabao Cheese in Olive Oil and her Maqueda Bay Smoked Mussels in Olive Oil. She makes jellies (guava and *bignay*), syrups (apple and *dalanghita*), jams (Indian Mango, Apple and Ginger, Apricot and Almond, Guava and Walnut, etc.), and *santol* chutney. And whiskey and cheesecakes: lemon tart and shortbread cookies, as well as biscotti. Even coconut vinegar with honey for your arthritis pains. Enjoy!

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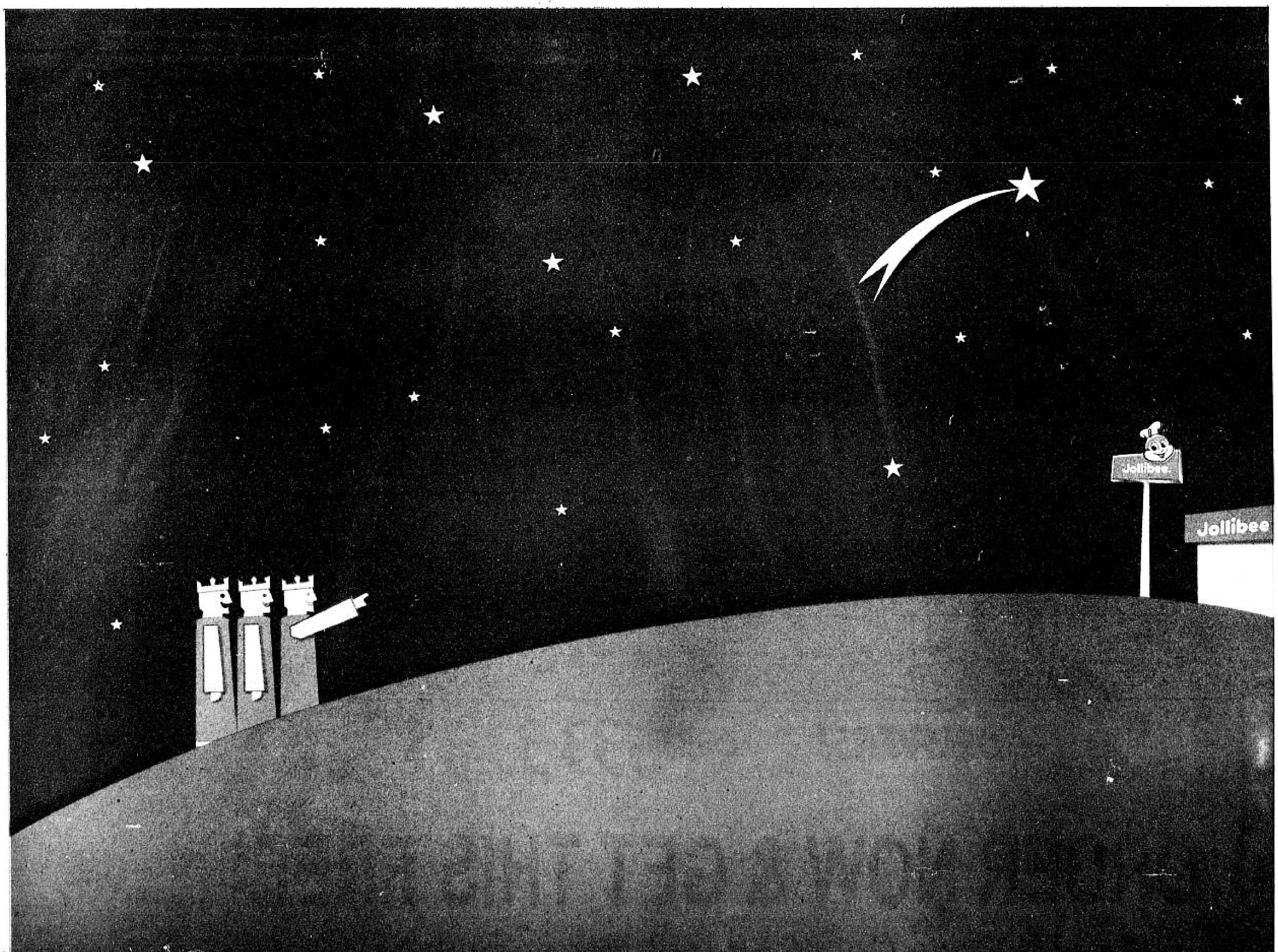

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1391 Series of 2001

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Get a chance to win P20,000 tax free, instantly in daily raffle draws from October 29 to Dec 21, 2001, here's how:

1. Touch Mobile subscribers who activate (*by calling 801*) their Touch Mobile units during the day from October 29 to December 21 are entitled to have a chance to win P20,000 in the electronic raffle of the day. (*Daily activation cut off is from 12:01AM to 12MN.*)
2. One winning number will be randomly drawn by an ERS (*Electronic Raffle Script*) from a Daily Activation Report of mobile numbers at 9AM the following day (ex. November 5 activations will be drawn on Nov 6) at the *Globe Telecom Plaza Building in Mandaluyong City* in the presence of a DTI representative. Draws for Saturdays and Sundays will be held during the Monday draw. Monday draws will announce 3 winners (2 winners for the weekend draws and 1 winner for the Monday draw).
3. The Winner will be notified via text that reads: *"Congratulations! You just won P20,000 from Touch Mobile..."* The Winner will also be notified through a phone call from the **Touch Mobile P20,000 Everyday Raffle** team, who will ask for their name and address. They will also be notified through registered mail. Winners for the week will be announced in print-ads.
4. Winners may claim their prizes after 5 working days for Metro Manila winners & 7 working days for provincial winners. (If the raffle date falls on a weekend or a holiday, count 5 or 7 days from the next working day.) Winners may claim their prizes during working days only (Monday-Friday).
5. To claim their prizes, winners should personally bring their Touch Mobile cell phone with the winning mobile number, a valid ID and the mailed notice to either:
   - Metro Manila Winners- Globe Telecom Treasury Cashier at the 2F Globe Telecom Plaza, Pioneer St., Mandaluyong City.
   - Provincial winners - cheques will be sent to the cashier of the Globe Telecom Business Center nearest to the winner as indicated in the registered mail.
6. Prizes that remain unclaimed after 60 days from receipts of notice will be forfeited with prior DTI approval.
7. All Employees of Globe Telecom, Islacom, their advertising agencies and participating Globe Telecom and Islacom Business Centers including their relatives up to second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining in this promo.
8. *Touch Mobile subscribers (subs) who purchased their Phonekits/SIMpacks before October 29 are included in the October 29 raffle only.*

All Touch Mobile test SIMs are excluded from this raffle.

* *From 8:01AM to 10:00PM, Mon. to Sat.*

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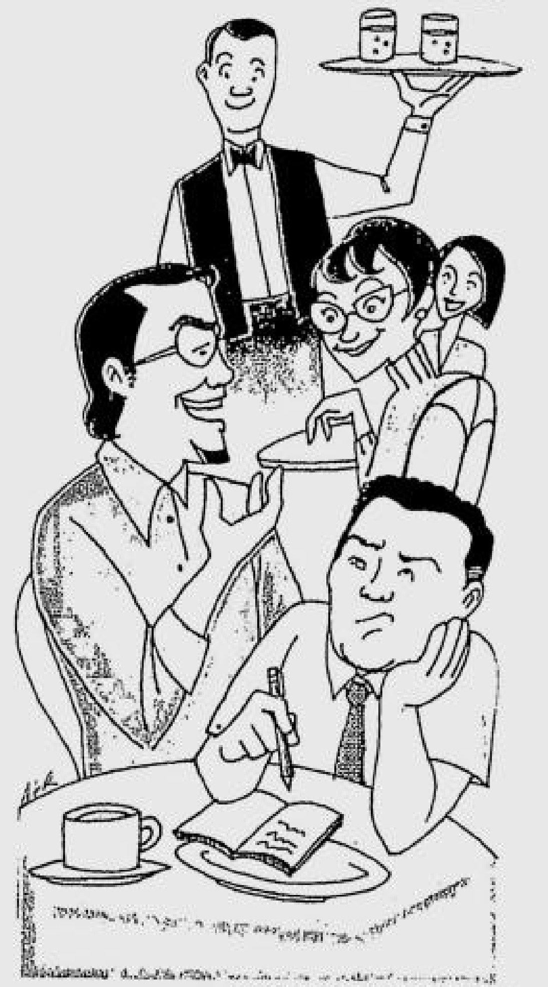

ILLUSTRATIONS: ALBERT RODRIGU

Valiant attempts by the political equivalent of a fat girl

THE MAD TEA PARTY

Clinton Palanca

THE TOPIC of this column (in the broader sense) is about food; but the topic of this column (in the particular sense) is the topic of food. The editor of this section is very generous with me in that she allows me metaphysical speculation, social satire and various other diversions, as long as, somewhere within the 800 words allotted to me, someone eats something. Sometimes I'm not skillful enough to pull it off: I knew she would see past the one in which I wanted to write about music and meaning, and began: "While eating a leek the other day, its fibrous nature reminded of Rachmaninoff's second piano concerto... etc." But because I believe that cuisine is a language all on its own, and that language is necessarily expressive of humanity, food is not a bad jumping-off point to ponder on thoughts that might not be given much attention if it were given the catchy title of, say, "The Reflexive Consciousness and the Identity of Being."

Dandyish image

Recently, I've noticed that the public perception of me is that of one who lives the life of a dandyish aesthete, a heterosexual Oscar Wilde perhaps, who spends his time in riotous dissipation, gluttony and sexual orgies involving handcuffs, courgettes and daubs of Marmite. I would, indeed, be mildly interested in having a taste of living like Michael Hutchenson; but this involves being a multimillionaire and a rock star, and in order to do this I would have to (a) earn a lot of money and (b) enjoy rock music. I understand that being able to sing or play the guitar is also helpful, though not absolutely necessary. Unfortunately, the life I lead is more like that of Prufrock, "measured out in coffeespoons."

The city that I live in, the one that I see from my balcony or through the closed window of a car, is as layered and dark and seductive as Durrell's Alexandria. There is a half-glimpsed world of the rich, the world of invitational parties, dinner parties in the hidden palatial splendor of a New Manila or Forbes Park mansion, where the talk is of the merits of Puiforcat versus Ercuis, the new stilettos from Blahnik, and the new restaurant in the south of France that one absolutely must try. Those outside the Chinese community can hardly begin to understand the complexity of respect, kinship and trust that fuel their relationships, from verbal business agreements at a cor-

VALIANT/ p.D4

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The 'masa' takes center stage

BY JIMMY SANTIAGO, TBWA/SMP

THE 17TH Ad Congress is about certain classes and types of people not usually featured in advertising for their lack of charm and aspirational qualities.

"Les Retirables", the senior citizens, is one such kind. Wrinkle-skinned and limited in movements by virtue of calcium deficiency in their bones, the oldies of our time are those who can buy all the goodies. In the eyes of the Congress, they matter so much. They happen to be in a position of great financial security. This is the market that gets handsome discounts in fast food chains and restaurants, true, but the amazing thing about them is they have so much money to spend and so little to spend for. After this Congress, marketers are expected to never again leave this aging-but-growing mass of consumers to Viagra and liposuction alone.

Other interesting markets come to fore in this biennial event, all of them potentially fertile grounds for advertising communications. "They are not the stereotypes," as Abby Jimenez, chair of the creative committee, puts its. Not anymore the likes of a wide-eyed woman, smiling ear-to-ear, delightfully holding a block of butter close to her face. Neither is it about the fashionable AB-class *baget* who wears nothing but signatured jeans will not be caught dead buying dirty ice cream. As one shockingly observes in the mass media campaign for the 17th Ad Congress, today's Filipino consumer has evolved. Marketers better notice the enormous change in the taste and preference (whether in food or choice of sexual partners) among their target market or lose out in the dog-eat-dog race for market leadership.

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Marketers better notice the enormous change in the taste and preference (whether in food or choice of sexual partners) among their target market or lose out in the dog-eat-dog race for market leadership

"Les Miserables"

Though much will be discussed about emerging markets and new market trends, the center stage has been reserved for the poor. Never before has the organization of advertising elite paid so much attention to the mass of Filipino people who have the least ability to buy anything we advertise on TV. Then again, is there any better time than now to recognize the power of a people whose voices we heard recently in Edsa and Mendiola?

Coming our way is possibly the most tumultuous transition of power in Philippine politics, and having witnessed the role played by the poor in the transformation of our society, this year's Congress officials simply know better than to refute the argument that the poor has become too big to ignore.

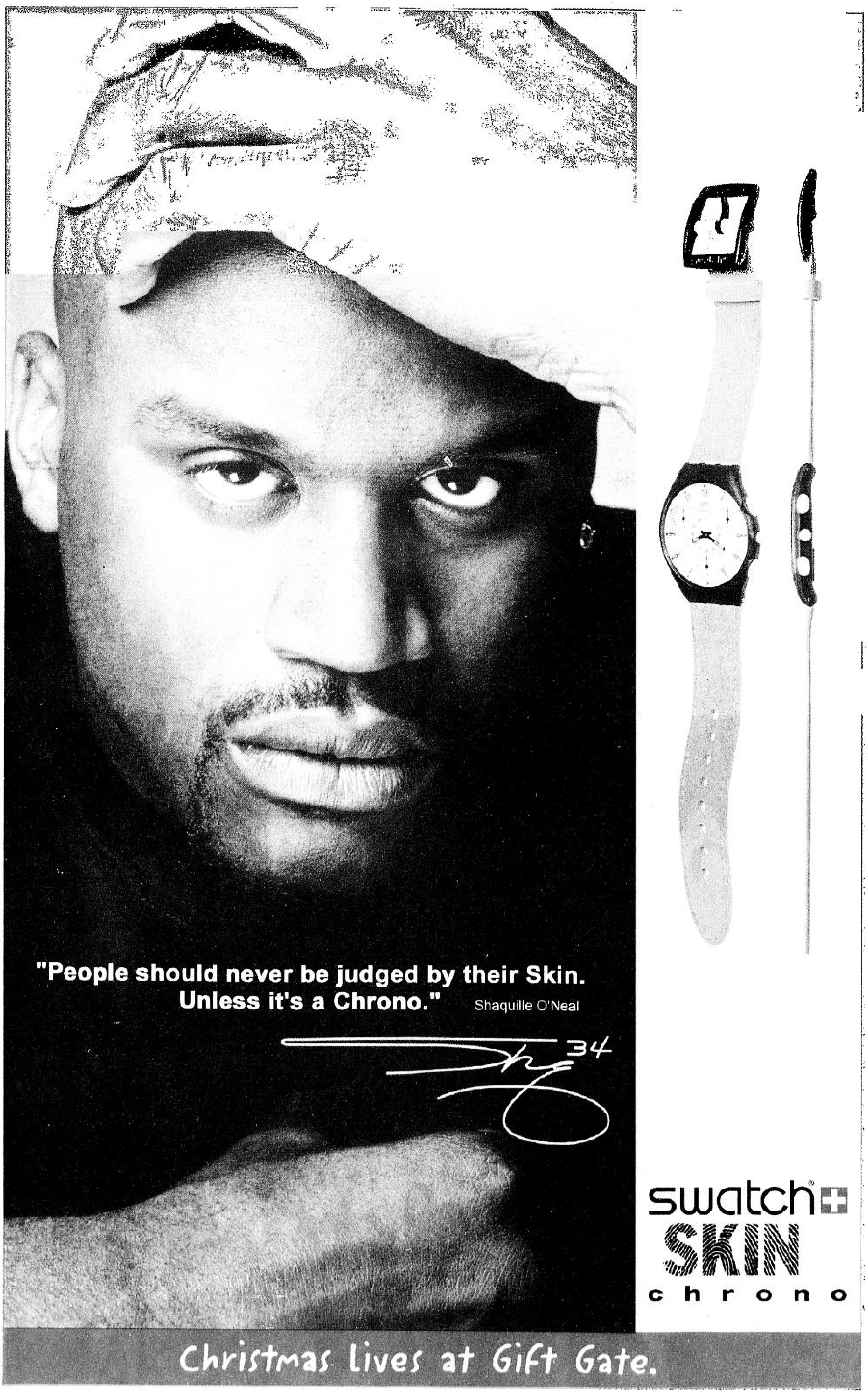
The opening ceremonies of the Congress in November will be an opera on what Professor Randy David calls "the hidden injuries of the poor." That growing, gnawing and festering sense of worthlessness among men who try so hard to improve their lives but without success. What they need is a stage to expose their wounds. A few months ago, Edsa Shrine served that purpose. Later on, Mendiola. Now, Waterfront, a venue for all the world to see how much the poor have bled.

They need loud speakers to amplify their whining and groaning up to piercing levels. They need a church building to pray for healing or a plaza to rise up en masse, even angrily, if you will, only to be heard, though their voices have been turned hoarse by the thick dirt in the air they breathe daily.

More than a musical show complete with angst, it is going to be a soap opera like no other. A saga compressed tightly but able to make clear the rhyme and reason of DE existence—the survival and agony without the ecstasy of living as a dispossessed Filipino. The play rises, during climax, to become a soaring inspirational essay of redemption, of self-respect restored, of dignity regained, of a Filipino finding out who he is deep inside, what he is made of and what he can do. Gary Granada, the casual, unassuming genius of the music world, who co-authored the libretto with this writer and Robert Labayen, call it quite simply, the operatic confrontation between the *jologs* and the *coños*. You will see, though, that Gary's treatment of the play if far from being a mere clash of classes. Rather, it is full of dramatic twists and turns, betraying Gary's radical views on the subject of being Filipino at this day and age.

That the Catholic Church, an entity I am pious to, is preoccupied with the poor; that GMA's Sona during the opening of the joint Congress was centered on the poor are realities not at all difficult to comprehend. They truly have a duty to fulfill. But advertising? What has advertising got to do with the poor? Isn't advertising better served by the moneyed and the educated? The answer is a complex one. In fact, you need to sit through a Congress to realize how important the poor, the oppressed, the captives and the blind have become during these economically trying times.

At the risk of pre-empting the opening ceremonies of the Ad Congress, let me lift a few verses from its theme song: "*O bangon na* Pilipino, *di na muling maaapi, di mananakaw ang yaman mo, pagkat ito'y di salapi, ang yaman mo'y hindi ginto, hindi maglalaho; dangal na siya's nag-aalab sa* Pinoy *mong puso*".


"People should never be judged by their Skin.
Unless it's a Chrono." Shaquille O'Neal
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swatch+
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Christmas lives at Gift Gate.

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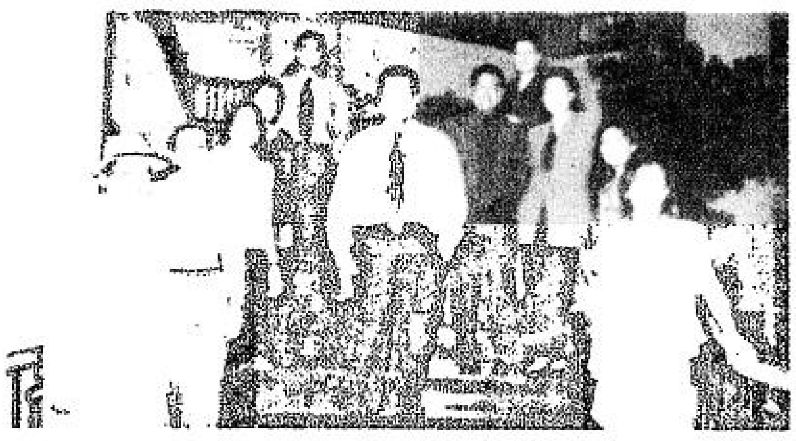
The people who know the people

They kept the spirit of the Congress alive, and added their own creative touches. Yes, these times are 'bongga,' but not without reason.



READY, AIM...

Constantly right on target, the Philippine Advertising Congress executive committee for 2001 were Pedro N. Dy-Liacco, overall chair; Angelica P. Suiza, vice chair; Agapito Alcantara, Jr., finance committee chair; Ma. Belen M. Femando, administrative committee chair; Roberto V. Barreiro, PR and publicity committee chair; Annabelle L. Jimenez, creative committee chair; Herminio G. Ordonez, programs committee chair; and Dr. Ceferino S. Azarcon, executive director of the Philippine Association of National Advertisers (Pana), the host for the 17th PAC.

Sifting for great Filipino ads

BY ROGER PE, DDB PHILIPPINES

HOW CREATIVE are "effective" ads? There are ads that sell but their advertising suck. There are ads that build brands but their advertising is boring, making their consumer loyalty to them vulnerable to change. How effective are your ads in making your client's cash registers ring? Start with a good product and it is easy. How effective are they in bringing in the gongs from awards shows? Tough.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is not the Effies. This is the 17th Philippine Advertising Congress creative competition. Where creativity rules above all. And if you think you are going to breeze through it like you did three ad congresses ago, you're in for one big surprise.

For starters, they've assembled the very best in the committee. Not just clerks or secretaries. But people who know their apples from oranges. They are no less than Abby Jimenez of Jimenez D'Arcy, overall chair of creative committee and Merlee Jayme of Ace/Saatchi and Saatchi, competition chair. Throw in 70 percent of the industry's most awarded creative directors who know their Luerzers. Mix it with a grievance committee on hand to listen to your complaints. Get ready for some stiff scrutiny. And no kidding please, have your Prozacs handy.

As in any creative event, this one started with screaming *beso-besos*, *chica-chicas*, and hearing the word "fabulous" countless times. Divas, ice queens, legends, Gloria Stuarts, the progressives, the next batch... brown Bill Bernbachs and John Hegarties all..Some were grossly missed. If egos were to be measured on the weighing scale, chances are you can't. Thinking of bombing that portion of the hotel? The whole ad industry will die.

Jury members were assigned rooms. As soon as we stepped into Camelia, we were impressed. Imagine feeling like a member of a celebrity panel of judges, giving 9.85 from a computer and your composite scores, tabulated by one of the country's top auditing firms. Hmm, letdown. The computers were just props. Seemed ominous of the events about to unfold.

Secret's great cinemawork was exhilarating as its direction. No screaming font. No artsy-fartsy so-ooo hard production design. It's got real class. The art director definitely knew his medium. The first time I saw it, I was mesmerized. I thought I was tuned in to a Thai channel. Indeed, it was a Thai commercial. But what was it doing in a Philippine awards competition?

Close Up's Halloween poster was a winner. Hope it didn't get waylaid along metal street. Dole Pineapple Juice's brutally simple television ad "color bar" was interesting. Safeguard's "Pear" deserved to be honored. Sharp television TV ad "Flat", and those of Canesten, Nestlé Yogurt, ditto. Why weren't these in international award shows?

Nido's "Bench" and Glow-In-The-Dark" television ads were breakthroughs from a used-to-be an unexciting brand. Sheen has already won citations from the Clio and New York Festivals. The judges have a lot explanations to do if they fail.

Radio was the most pathetic. It has never made inroads. Screaming, yelling, hard sell stuff. And so many American-sounding wannabes. And this one for a motorcycle brand—will they stop copying the radio style blazed by Petron some years back, please?

We plodded through thousands of print, radio, TV, collateral campaigns with only pee breaks in between. Our gall bladders almost burst. Our eyes squinted a hundred times. Our ears blasted with one-minuters and full songs in the best jingle category. Though some judges were crying over these bombardments as torture to their eardrums, courtesy demanded that they should remain glued to every piece. After all, an entrant, no matter how bad it sounded or looked, deserve a jury's undivided attention. Pity the ad agencies which coughed up hundreds of thousands of pesos for their entry fees only to face judges which fast forwarded their entries. These kinds of judges should never be invited again.

Yasmin Ahmad, Kuala Lumpur Leo Burnett creative director, said when he sat in the 2000 Clio Awards jury: "What particularly impressed me was that very explanation I had to give for the Asian work was given a fair hearing."

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17th PAC hosts communication forum for students, teachers

KEEPING its role as an appropriate venue for views and interaction, the 17th Philippine Advertising Congress aims not only to keep all advertising practitioners and marketers abreast of the latest marketing developments but also to prepare future communicators to set the industry ablaze with innovation and ideas. Thus, a communication arts forum is designed as one of the Congress' important highlights. The half-day symposium will assemble university students—the future admen—and teachers of communication arts and allied disciplines on Nov. 24, from 2 to 5 p.m. at Cebu Plaza Hotel.

A powerful roster of speakers, mostly creative dynamos, will come to provide the participants from the academe with useful insights on how the local advertising world works. Executive creative directors Raul Castro of Lowe Lintas and Partners and Micky Domingo of McCann-Erickson Philippines will share their own ideas on how advertising and marketing objectives meet in harmony through the session Creativity in Motion. Basic Advertising Inc. president and CCO Tere Filipina, on the other hand, will talk about what really works in the challenging marketplace by citing various advertising campaigns in her session on Success Cases.

Students and teachers will leave the forum filled with fresh and exciting ideas that they can apply in the classroom and at the actual work environment, and a better understanding of the role of advertising in meeting the evolving needs of consumers.

Romancing the customer

BY BONG OSORIO, CAPRI

BUSINESS today is not just about building brand equity or value—it is creating experiences that make a difference, building powerful relationships, strengthening of friendships and emotional bonds, and more important, developing a lasting romance.

Think about it.

When was the last time you fell in love with a pair of rubber shoes, a massage service, or a cell phone company? How did it "turn on you on", gain your respect, and communicate with you so well, you end up "dating and romancing" it?

Dr. Paul Temporal, a leading global expert on brand creation, development and management, says, "A revolution is taking place in the world of branding. Essentially, agencies, companies, and individuals involved in the branding process appear to be shifting their focus from the visual aspects of identity and design to the realms of brand strategy and the customer experience."

Against this scenario, brand management is now gearing toward not just making single-minded selling propositions, but actually delivering them. The focus has now shifted from the creative pitch to the actual buyer and user. Temporal, a speaker in the upcoming Pana-hosted 17th Philippine Advertising Congress (PAC), attributes this shift of thought and action to the powerful influence of what he calls Customer Relationship Management (CRM).

The end result is "Je t'aime"

CRM is the process of building profitable relationships with your customers. While traditional advertising is often based on that "Aha!", sweaty-palm "Wow" moment when the "Big Idea" is suddenly realized, CRM follows a well-defined process that places the customer at the very center of all thinking and activity.

Regardless of your best advertising efforts to get customers to think of your product, to try and retry it, over time, each customer is going to give his patronage and loyalty to the product or company that satisfies his needs consistently. If you have to achieve that, you need a CRM program in place. Step out from behind the curtain and find out what is important to your customer. What does he look for when deciding to purchase a product? What is holding him back and what would help him make the best purchase decision? And once your customer has taken the time to tell you, then you better listen, and follow through.

CRM is "Romancing the Customer." It helps you make the buyer or user fell happy, appreciated, and most of all, loved. When planned and implemented well, CRM programs can help build the brand-customer relationship that starts with an acquaintance, develops into a deeper emotional involvement, further grows into greater friendship and loyalty, and finally graduates into "Je t'aime."

'Share of Heart' vs. 'Share of Wallet'

To some marketing people, the goal of CRM is to capture a substantial "share of wallet"—in other words, try to increase the portion of each customer's spend that accrues to the brand. This "quick-buck" thinking might create short-term demand and sales, but cannot build an enduring romance.

Temporal would prefer to think of it as capturing "share of heart"—that is, creating an emotional bond with your customers such that they pledge allegiance to your brand. If you achieve this allegiance, "share of wallet" will be a natural by-product. "In the long term, if you appeal to the hearts of these customers, they will themselves become a part of your best sales force—by being your happy, and thus loyal customers and advocates," Temporal says.

Know more about how to "make love with your customers."

Communication Arts Forum

Raul Castro, vice president and creative director of Lowe Lintas, and best known for championing one of the most phenomenal advertising campaigns in the country—Surf's Lumen series, gears up for his scheduled Cebu ad congress interaction with students and professors of marketing communication on Nov. 24, 2 to 6 p.m. at the Cebu Plaza Hote.

Castro will specifically talk about Creativity in Motion, or how a marketing goal can be successfully realized by an insightful communications strategy. This will be fleshed out by providing answers to these questions: What kind of creative idea do consumers break into? Are the best ideas, brand ideas? What is a likeable idea?

Castro's CA Forum dissertation will be amplified with the exposition of some success stories to be done by Tere Filipinia, president of Basic Advertising and Mickey Domingo, president of the Creative Guild of the Philippines.

The exclusive and dedicated creative forum with the delegates from the academe is a special treat, to honor and organize this sector's heavy turnout, support, and interest in the biennial advertising event.

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